MONDAY
April 20, 2026

BENGALURU
CITY EDITION
22 Pages ₹ 6.00

THE HINDU

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INDIA'S NATIONAL NEWSPAPER SINCE 1878

Vol. 57 • No. 93

RNI No. KARENG/1970/49945

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Remove conditions from Bill: rights group

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It points to a structural issue in labour market

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Kings retain top spot with emphatic win

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NEARBY

No respite from heat as 5 districts cross 40°C

BENGALURU
Five districts recorded a maximum temperature of over 40°C on Sunday. According to the IMD, four districts in north interior Karnataka and one in south interior Karnataka saw the mercury rising above the 40°C mark. » PAGE 4

CM: Modi playing politics on women's quota

BELAGAVI
Prime Minister Narendra Modi is playing politics in the name of women's reservation, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said in Ranebennur in Haveri district.. » PAGE 4

EDUCATIONPLUS » 4 PAGES

Talks today, Trump says as Iran keeps ships out of Strait

U.S. President threatens to destroy civilian infrastructure if Tehran does not accept deal; ceasefire set to expire soon even as stand-off continues

Associated Press
WASHINGTON

Choppy waters: A tanker anchored in the Strait of Hormuz off the coast of Qeshm Island of Iran on Saturday. AP

U.S. President Donald Trump said on Sunday that U.S. negotiators would head to Pakistan on Monday for talks with Iran, lifting hopes of extending a ceasefire set to expire by Wednesday.

The prospect of talks, which Iran did not immediately confirm, came as ships remain unable to transit the Strait of Hormuz amid threats from Iran and a U.S. blockade on ships heading to and from Iranian ports. The White House said Vice-President J.D. Vance, would lead the U.S. team with envoys Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner. Iranian officials earlier on Sunday said that they remained open to negotiation, but held firm that ships would not pass the strait while the U.S. blockade remained in effect. "It is impossible for others to pass through the Strait of Hormuz while we cannot," Iran parliamentary Speaker Mohammed Bagher Ghalibaf said.

Mr. Trump accused Iran of violating the ceasefire by firing at ships and threatened to destroy civilian infrastructure in Iran, if it does not take the deal that the U.S. is offering.

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RELATED REPORTS ON
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23 killed in explosion at fireworks factory near Virudhunagar in T.N.

S. Sundar
VIRUDHUNAGAR

In one of the deadliest accidents at a fireworks factory in Tamil Nadu in recent times, 23 workers were killed and eight injured in an explosion at Vanaja Fireworks Unit at Kattanarpatti near Virudhunagar on Sunday.

A second explosion at the unit injured 17, including six policemen and four firemen. Rescuers and presspersons who had gathered at the spot narrowly escaped unhurt.

Most victims were charred beyond recognition with many bodies blown away by the impact of the explosion. Firemen were seen collecting mutilated body parts strewn all around the unit. Many bodies were pulled out from the debris after one of the sheds came crashing down on the workers.

The condition of two persons is said to be critical with over 80% burns. All the injured, including a child and five women, were rushed to the Virudhunagar Government Medical College and Hospital.

Following instructions from Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin, Ministers K.K.S.S.R. Ramachandran and Thangam Thennarasu, along with local MLA A.R.R. Srinivasan, rushed to the spot to oversee the rescue operation being carried out by firemen and the police.

Virudhunagar Collector N.O. Sukhaputra and SP N. Shreenatha camped at the site which is some 7 km west off the Madurai-Tirunelveli National Highway from R.R. Nagar.

The Collector said there was a blast around 3.15 p.m. at the shed where chemicals were being mixed.

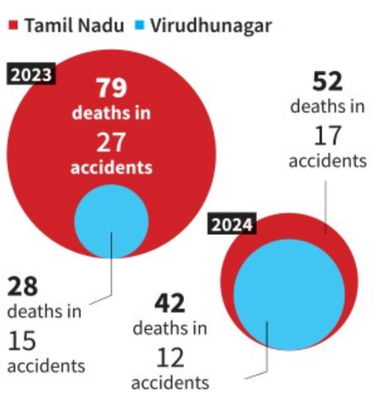
The fireworks industry is shut on Sundays, but the unit was operating without permission, he said.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 8

Recurring disasters

Data show that since 2022, at least 134 people had died and 89 had been injured in firecracker unit accidents in Virudhunagar district of Tamil Nadu

Torn apart: Rescue workers react after a blast during search operations near the firecracker unit in Virudhunagar, Tamil Nadu, on Sunday. G. MOORTHY



At least 21 people were killed in firecracker manufacturing accidents in Virudhunagar between April and August in 2025

Bengaluru City Corporations
•North •South •East •West •Central

Sri Siddaramaiah
Hon'ble Chief Minister
Govt. of Karnataka

Sri D.K. Shivakumar
Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister
Govt. of Karnataka

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Greater Bengaluru Authority

Government of India

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- Narendra Modi

Government of India launches
Bharat Maritime Insurance Pool (BMIP)

An initiative to manage large maritime risks, ensuring uninterrupted, sovereign-backed coverage for critical exposures.

With coverage up to **USD 1.5 billion** per event and dedicated solutions for:
War & SRCC risks in high-risk zones
Hull & Machinery protection
Protection & Indemnity (P&I) for Indian shipowners

Sovereign Guarantee
Backed by the Government of India, providing unshakable stability to our maritime sector

National Collective
Managed by GIC Re, India's national reinsurer, with the unified support of the entire Indian General Insurance Industry

Strategic Autonomy
Ensuring that Indian vessels and vital energy supplies remain secure, resilient, steadfast, & uninterrupted by global headwinds

India's Ships. India's Supplies. India's Security.

Together We Serve
General Insurance Council
Industry Association of General Insurance Companies

GIC Re
General Insurance Corporation of India
भारतीय साधारण बीमा निगम

M BG-BGE

Impact Player and the Domino effect

This is the fourth year of competition with the innovation; while there has been a strident appeal from the playing community to dispense with it, the IPL is insistent that there will be no rethink until after the 2027 edition

K. MURALI KUMAR

R. Kaushik

Imagine life without change. Without progress, without improvements, without moving on from the yesterday. Imagine being trapped in a time warp, waking up to the same things every day, going through a rigmarole that comes with the regularity of sunrise and sunset.

Imagine if, nearly 150 years after the first Test match, cricket remained a days' game, played with a red ball, on uncovered surfaces. Impossible, right? Especially for those weaned on a steady - overwhelming? - diet of 20-over cricket, the five-day game might not appeal entirely with its subtle ebbs and flows rather than in-your-face, outlandish exhibitions of skill and athleticism. For generations together, international cricket meant only the red-ball version, until limited-overs internationals were born almost out of compulsion, if you like.

England's men were in Australia for their quadrennial sojourn to battle it for the Ashes in the (Antipodean) summer of 1970-71 when the third Test at the magnificent Melbourne Cricket Ground had to be abandoned due to incessant rain. To ensure some action during a tour blighted by the elements, a limited-overs international was pencilled in so that the spectators could partake of some entertainment. The match was to be played over 40 (eight-ball) overs a side, on 5 January 1971; Ian Chappell's 60 trumped Player of the Match John Edrich's 82 as Australia breezed home by five wickets. Some four and a half years later, the first men's World Cup was played in England. Eight years thereafter, India produced the most stunning, stirring run to grab their first (and only) 60-over World Cup under Kapil Dev and the cricket world wasn't the same again.

A country that had looked askance as limited-overs play gained popularity in other parts of the world was now hooked to that format, a relationship further solidified in 1985 when Sunil Gavaskar led his unbeaten side to the World Championship of Cricket crown in Melbourne in his final assignment as the national captain. Only the semifinal (against England) and the epochal final (against mighty West Indies) of the 1983 Prudential World Cup were telecast live in India. That was upped to three matches at the WCC – the final league tie against Australia, the semifinal against New Zealand and the needle final against Pakistan at MCG.

The production quality of those matches transfixed a still fledgling Indian audience. The visuals were spectacular, the analysis top-notch. Indeed, even as Geoff Howarth, the New Zealand captain, was walking back towards the pavilion, run out looking for a second run, the camera zoomed in on his left pad, which had collapsed towards his knee. Howarth, we were educated, had his pads on wrongly. The buckles were on the outside of his left leg, the ball broke one of the three buckles on contact and therefore the pad slid down, hampering his running and resulting in his dismissal. For some reason, more than 41 years on, that slice of action is as fresh in memory as Pakistani's Nairobi-born Qasim Umar using his bat as a rifle to gun down the 'duck' accompanying him on the long walk back to the dressing room after being yorked first ball by a peach from Kapil in the final.

Coloured clothing, white ball, black sightscreens and the Indian outfit clambering on to Champion of Champions Ravi Shastri's Audi formalised India's romance with limited-overs cricket. Further fillip was provided by India and Pakistan jointly staging the 1987 World Cup (now standardised to 50 overs a side) and when the Indian market opened up a couple of years later as liberalisation gained firm root, Test cricket was in danger of being eclipsed by the upstart.

Who knew then that, in a stunning reversal, the 'upstart' would be pushed to a corner by an even more sprightly sibling a decade and a half later. If one-day international cricket was an accidental development, the 20-over version was a deliberate, well-planned, some might say even desperate, attempt to arrest an alarming slide in England, where cricket was shedding audiences by the hundreds over a reasonable period of time.

Seamless mix

One-day games assumed a monotonous hue of regularity and sameness while the county championship failed to retain old faithfuls, let alone attract newer fans. Research indicated the need for a shorter, snappier, more dramatic variant, and thus sprang T20 cricket, more than two decades back. It was an experiment more than anything else, most likely, because desperate times called for desperate measures. The T20 format was packaged as a seamless mix of the sport and of entertainment but one wasn't sure how it would be received. Well, we all know for certain now, don't we?

And therefore, to misquote a popular saying, necessity became the mother of innovation. Soon, India won the inaugural T20 World Cup, the Indian Premier League grabbed the consciousness of the cricketing world and here we are, bang in the middle of the 19th edition of a tournament that has no parallel when it comes to cricket.

The IPL has grown into a multi-billion-dollar industry without compromising on its core plank, cricket, but it hasn't merely rested on its laurels. From eight teams in 2008, it now has 10 protagonists, but that isn't the only significant change. Each year for the last few years, the intention has been to throw up something new to heighten the excitement stakes, which is how the Impact Player rule came into being ahead of the 2023 edition.

The intention behind introducing that concept wasn't to ramp up the rate of scoring or to boost team totals to the range of 225 and beyond on a consistent basis, actually. When it was first conceptualised, the idea behind the impact player was to allow teams to field an additional specialist bowler, ostensibly to provide a greater balance between scything willow and helpless ball. That it has had the diametrically opposite effect is one of the great ironies that make life so interesting. And unpredictable.

We are into the fourth year of competition with the Impact Player provision, and while there has been a strident appeal from the currently-playing community to dispense with that option, the IPL is insistent that there will be no rethink until after the 2027 edition. Undoubtedly, the latter decision has been dictated by other commitments because otherwise, why would you ignore the inputs of those who are playing the game, of the captains who have the luxury of summoning an additional option that goes against the basic cricketing tenet of 11 versus 11 but who aren't exactly fans of that 'luxury'?

The Impact Player rule has been used smartly and conveniently because, well, that's the whole idea, isn't it? Sometimes, it has given ponderous movers and unsafe catchers the license to just play as batters and tear bowling attacks apart. At others, it has facilitated those less than fully fit from using this to focus on their primary suit while biding their team and waiting for a full recovery, such as happened with Sanju Samson at the start of last season when he was cleared to bat but not keep for Rajasthan Royals. Or, last week, with Virat Kohli.

From the time he committed to being the best physical version of himself sometime in 2013, Kohli has been the benchmark when it comes to looking after his body, when it comes to professionalism. Even when his bat went cold and his quest for an international century ran beyond a whopping 1,000 days, there was no compromise on attention to fitness. Kohli was the catalyst of a fitness revolution in Indian cricket because he didn't just command that facet, he demanded it when he became the Test captain at the start of 2015. His intensity is scary, and it's a mini miracle that despite having operated at the highest level with that degree of intensity for nearly 18 years, he has assiduously kept burnout at bay.

To those who insist that Kohli is a freak of sorts and therefore should not be the yardstick against which to judge mere mortals, we say agreed, spot-on. But he is the most shining example of his generation, at the very least, of putting mind over matter, of achieving one's goals through clarity of thinking and an unwavering, unalloyed attention to detail that, combined with leaving no stone unturned in continuing to keep polishing one's skills, is a sure-shot recipe for success. Kohli has of course had issues with form, he has grappled with a troublesome back on and off for several years, but none of that has dimmed his fire or diminished his focus one bit.

To see Kohli pencilled in as an Impact Player for Royal Challengers Bengaluru last week, in a home fixture against Lucknow Super Giants, was therefore a bit of a shock to the system of those who have, in an almost backhanded compliment, taken a fit Kohli for granted. Just a few days prior to the LSG clash, Kohli didn't come out to field against Mumbai Indians at the Wankhede. It transpired later that he had been under the weather leading into the contest and was further hampered by a sore knee, which prevented him from fielding when Mumbai began their unsuccessful chase of 241 for an unlikely victory.

As a precautionary measure, and because the rules allowed it, Kohli didn't take the field when LSG batted first at the Chinnaswamy last Wednesday. The sight of Kohli watching on from the dugout as his bowlers ran rings around Rishabh Pant's side was a little disconcerting because that's not the Kohli we are used to. Some of us were debating if RCB should not consider resting Kohli totally, considering they were only chasing a modest 147, but the former captain opened (as impact sub) as per norm alongside Phil Salt and blazed to 49 off 34 before he was dismissed.

Normal service was restored on Saturday when RCB did not 'sub out' Kohli after posting 175 for eight against Delhi Capitals. Clearly, the need for precaution doesn't exist anymore and as soon as he could, Kohli was back out in the middle, prowling the infield, dashing around the outfield and taking a tumbling catch at long-off to pack off birthday boy and local lad, K.L. Rahul.

The showman was in his element; he doesn't address press conferences anymore (he hasn't attended one since September 2022) but if he did, he'd tell us that the dugout isn't his den, impact player rule or not.

THE GIST

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Over 100 entries grouped under one identity in SIR voter mapping

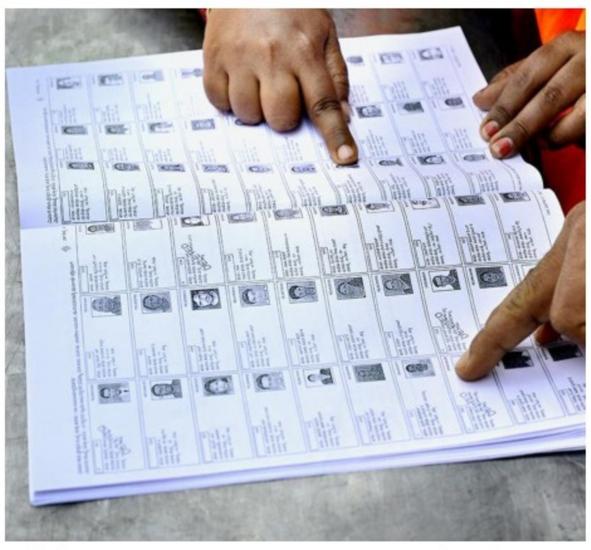
A voter in Bengaluru received a notice asking her to identify her 'correct electoral details'

Rishita Khanna
BENGALURU

With the voter roll mapping exercise under way in the State ahead of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR), a Bengaluru voter received a notice asking her to identify her "correct electoral details". The notice listed 103 entries of women named Nagalakshmi across Karnataka, all recorded as wives of men named Manjunath, with photographs showing different individuals.

The notice issued by the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) grouped all these entries under "Nagalakshmi, wife of Manjunath" and asked the recipient to identify her correct electoral details, even though the list had different individuals.

With the mapping exercise progressing, many people in the city are receiving similar notices that group together multiple individuals based on identical or similar names and relatives' names. As of April 18, official data shows that 73.57% of electors in Bengaluru Urban have been mapped, covering over 29.49 lakh voters.



With the mapping exercise progressing, many people in the city are receiving similar notices that group together multiple individuals based on identical or similar names and relatives' names. FILE PHOTO

A common complaint, however, is that these notices are reaching voters after the deadline has already passed. What is also not explained in these cases is what happens next. Once one entry is marked as "correct", there is no clarity on whether the remaining entries in the list will be treated as incorrect or removed.

Marginalised sections

Speaking to *The Hindu*, Booth Level Officers (BLOs) said the confusion was particularly evident in cases involving marginalised communities, where naming conventions do not follow a clear first name-last name format, or where individuals have only a single name or follow a common family name across generations, leading to multiple entries being clustered together.

Chances are high

"In such cases, the likelihood of multiple voters being grouped under one set of details is high," a BLO said, adding that despite the photographs being visibly different, such entries were being flagged together by the system, with voters complaining to them about no explanation being provided.

Record not found

Another set of problems emerging alongside these notices relates to voters who were listed as recently as in the 2025 electoral roll but are now unable to find their names during verification. "In many instances, voters who have not changed their residence for decades and possess voter ID cards issued prior to 2008 – cards that clearly carry Part Numbers and Constituency Numbers are still being shown as 'record not found' even after entering all these details into the system," said Gangappa, a BLO.

There are also instances where entering a voter's EPIC number brings up an entirely different name. The issue appears more frequently in cases where names have multiple spellings, such as Lakshmi and Laxmi, Mr. Gangappa added.

Maruthi S., another BLO, said that there were also voters who have consistently voted at the same booth for decades without shifting houses, yet their names were missing from past electoral rolls. Selvi P., 47, originally from Tamil Nadu but now a voter in Bengaluru, is among those affected. Despite having a valid voter ID and having voted in the city for years, her details could not be traced when officials attempted to verify her records against older rolls. Neither her name nor her father's appeared in earlier electoral lists.

In another case, Anitha was told the same. When she provided her voter ID, the system returned a "record not found" response. On checking again, the same EPIC number was found to be linked to a different name. Both Selvi and Anitha, who work as domestic workers in Ulsoor, possess valid documents including Aadhaar cards and birth certificates. Yet, their names were missing from the 2025 electoral roll.

Ms. Selvi said her birth certificate was not accepted as it carried her name in Tamil. Ms. Anitha, who has moved between Bidar, Gulbarga and Bengaluru for work, said she did not remember where she was first enrolled as a voter in 2002, a common problem raised by many.

Auspicious beginnings

Customers checking out ornaments at a jewellery shop, on the auspicious day of Akshaya Tritiya, in Bengaluru on Sunday. SUDHAKARA JAIN

Man found dead inside car in E-City

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A 56-year-old man was found dead inside a car on Manipal County Road in the Electronic City area early on Sunday.

The deceased has been identified as Narayanappa, a resident of Basapura. According to the police, he had left his house around 5 a.m., but was later found dead inside the car parked along the roadside. Passers-by noticed the body inside the vehicle and alerted the police. Preliminary probe revealed injuries on his face and chest, raising strong suspicion of foul play. The Electronic City police rushed to the spot, conducted an inspection, and informed the family members.

The victim's relatives have alleged that Narayanappa was murdered and his body was dumped inside the car. The police suspect that a financial dispute could be the motive behind the crime. A case has been registered.

'Chowgule Shipyard delivers its first vessel'

The Hindu Bureau
MANGALURU

Ship building has been revived in Mangaluru with Chowgule Shipyard delivering its first vessel, *Frisian Future*, built in Mangaluru, according to MP for Dakshina Kannada Capt. Brijesh Chowta.

Capt. Chowta, on Sunday, posted on 'X': "Wonderful to see a once-defunct maritime facility brought back to life."

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हेमन्त सरकार दे रही नया आसमान

आवेदन शुरू
16 अप्रैल 2026

अंतिम तिथि
30 अप्रैल 2026

कमर्शियल पायलट लाइसेंस (CPL)
ट्रेनिंग - सत्र 2026-27 में प्रवेश प्रारंभ

सोना सोबरन उड़ान अकादमी (झारखण्ड फ्लाइंग इंस्टीट्यूट)

भविष्य के युवा पायलटों से आवेदन आमंत्रित करता है

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कोर्स की मुख्य बातें

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- **प्रशिक्षण स्थल:** दुमका, झारखण्ड
- **सुविधाएं:** आधुनिक सिम्युलेटर, ग्राउंड स्कूल और हॉस्टल सुविधा उपलब्ध

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PR NO- 377877 IPRD(26-27)D

सूचना एवं जनसंपर्क विभाग, झारखण्ड

How altered mosquitoes could reshape malaria control

New research has confirmed that genetically modified mosquitoes can suppress malaria parasites from real-world infections, not just laboratory cultures; it also reported that advanced mosquito genetic engineering can be carried out in malaria-endemic regions, helping build local scientific expertise and regulatory capacity

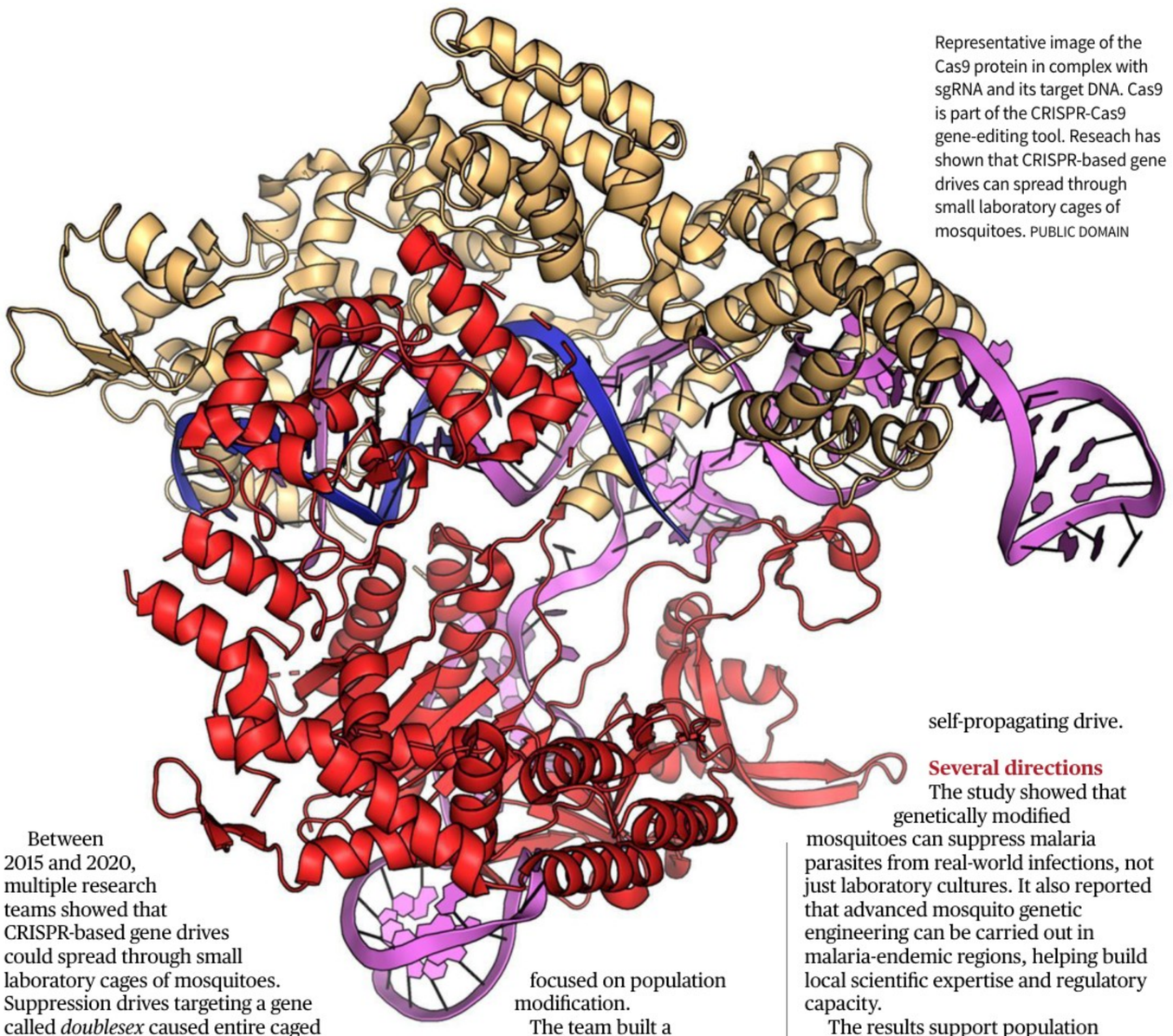
Manjeera Gowravaram

For decades, malaria control has worked by reducing the number of mosquitoes and treating infected people. As a result bed nets, indoor insecticide spraying, and effective medicines have saved millions of lives. Yet malaria remains one of the world's deadliest infectious diseases, killing more than half a million people each year, most of them children in sub-Saharan Africa.

Anti-malaria efforts have also slowed in many regions as mosquitoes become more resistant to insecticides and the malaria parasite evolves resistance to drugs.

These setbacks have led scientists to reconsider a long-held assumption: that the only way to fight malaria is to kill mosquitoes.

For more than 20 years, researchers have explored an alternative: modifying mosquitoes so they no longer carry malaria parasites.



Representative image of the Cas9 protein in complex with sgRNA and its target DNA. Cas9 is part of the CRISPR-Cas9 gene-editing tool. Reseach has shown that CRISPR-based gene drives can spread through small laboratory cages of mosquitoes. PUBLIC DOMAIN

'Transmission Zero'

This idea is now moving closer to reality through a genetic technology called a gene drive. A series of studies over the past few years has shown that gene drives can spread through mosquito populations under increasingly realistic conditions.

One recent study published in *Nature*, led by Tibebu Habtewold and Dickson Lwetoijera at the Ifakara Health Institute in Tanzania, working with collaborators at Imperial College London, demonstrated for the first time that genetically modified mosquitoes can block malaria parasites circulating in endemic African settings.

The work forms part of 'Transmission Zero', a Tanzania-led and internationally supported project developing genetic mosquito control.

How gene drives work

An organism normally has a 50% chance of passing a specific gene to its offspring. A gene drive alters this rule.

Using the gene-editing tool CRISPR-Cas9, scientists design a genetic system that copies itself onto the partner chromosome during reproduction. As a result, far more than half of the offspring inherit the modified gene, often over 90%. Over multiple generations, this biased inheritance allows a gene to spread rapidly through a population.

Researchers are developing two main types of mosquito gene drives.

The first is population suppression. These drives disrupt the genes essential for female mosquitoes to develop or become fertile. As the drive spreads, more females become sterile, causing mosquito populations to shrink or collapse.

The second approach is population modification, also called replacement. Here, mosquitoes remain alive but carry genes that prevent the malaria parasites from developing inside their bodies. This strategy thus reduces the mosquitoes' ability to transmit malaria.

Between 2015 and 2020, multiple research teams showed that CRISPR-based gene drives could spread through small laboratory cages of mosquitoes. Suppression drives targeting a gene called *doublesex* caused entire caged populations to collapse within a few generations. Other studies engineered mosquitoes to produce molecules such as antimicrobial peptides or antibodies to harm the malaria parasites.

As small cages provide an overly simple environment, researchers built large indoor cages that allowed mosquitoes to swarm, mate, feed, and reproduce in more natural ways.

In 2021, researchers at Imperial College London and partner institutions described experiments designed to mimic real mosquito populations. A small number of mosquitoes carrying a *doublesex* suppression gene drive were released into stable populations of *Anopheles gambiae*.

Over eight to ten months, the drive steadily increased in frequency, egg production collapsed, and every experimental population eventually died out. Importantly, the researchers didn't detect any genetic changes that would both block CRISP-Cas9 and allow mosquitoes to evade the gene drive while remaining viable.

The experiments indicated that gene drives could work safely in messy real-world settings as well.

The Tanzania study

While suppression drives aim to cut mosquito numbers, the Tanzania study focused on population modification.

The team built a high-containment insectary in Bagamoyo in Tanzania that allowed advanced genetic work to be carried out in a malaria-endemic country rather than having to develop the technology elsewhere, then importing it to Tanzania.

The researchers engineered local *Anopheles gambiae* mosquitoes to produce two antimicrobial peptides in their midgut after taking a blood meal.

Instead of using laboratory parasite strains, the team collected blood samples from children with malaria in three nearby villages. Both modified and unmodified mosquitoes were fed on this blood, and the team tracked the development of parasites.

In ordinary mosquitoes, parasites develop normally and reach the tissues linked to the salivary glands, starting transmission. In the modified mosquitoes, the parasites were severely impaired and often failed to reach the infectious stage. In some experiments, none of the modified mosquitoes carried potentially transmissible parasites.

The researchers also demonstrated a split gene drive. One mosquito line carried the anti-malaria genes while another provided the Cas9 enzyme. When combined, about 94% of offspring inherited the protective trait, allowing the researchers to test the protective genes without immediately deploying a fully self-propagating drive.

Several directions

The study showed that genetically modified mosquitoes can suppress malaria parasites from real-world infections, not just laboratory cultures. It also reported that advanced mosquito genetic engineering can be carried out in malaria-endemic regions, helping build local scientific expertise and regulatory capacity.

The results support population modification as a realistic alternative to population suppression, with potentially fewer ecological risks because it doesn't aim to eliminate an entire species.

At the same time, researchers acknowledge some major challenges. Developing effective anti-parasite genes is difficult. Different pathogens, and even different strains of the same parasite, may require different or combined molecular weapons to prevent resistance. This is why gene-drive research is moving in several directions.

Researchers are also exploring self-limiting and reversible gene drives, as well as molecular 'off switches' that could slow or stop spread.

Most scientists have emphasised that gene drives can't be a standalone solution. Eliminating malaria will still depend on bed nets, spraying, medicines, vaccines, surveillance, and strong health systems. Gene drives, if proven to be completely safe and acceptable, could be an additional tool.

In the final analysis, no gene-drive mosquitoes have yet been released into the wild to control malaria; whether it will one day depends on extensive ecological risk assessment, regulatory review, and community engagement.

(Manjeera Gowravaram has a PhD in RNA biochemistry and works as a freelance science writer. gmanjeera@gmail.com)

THE GIST

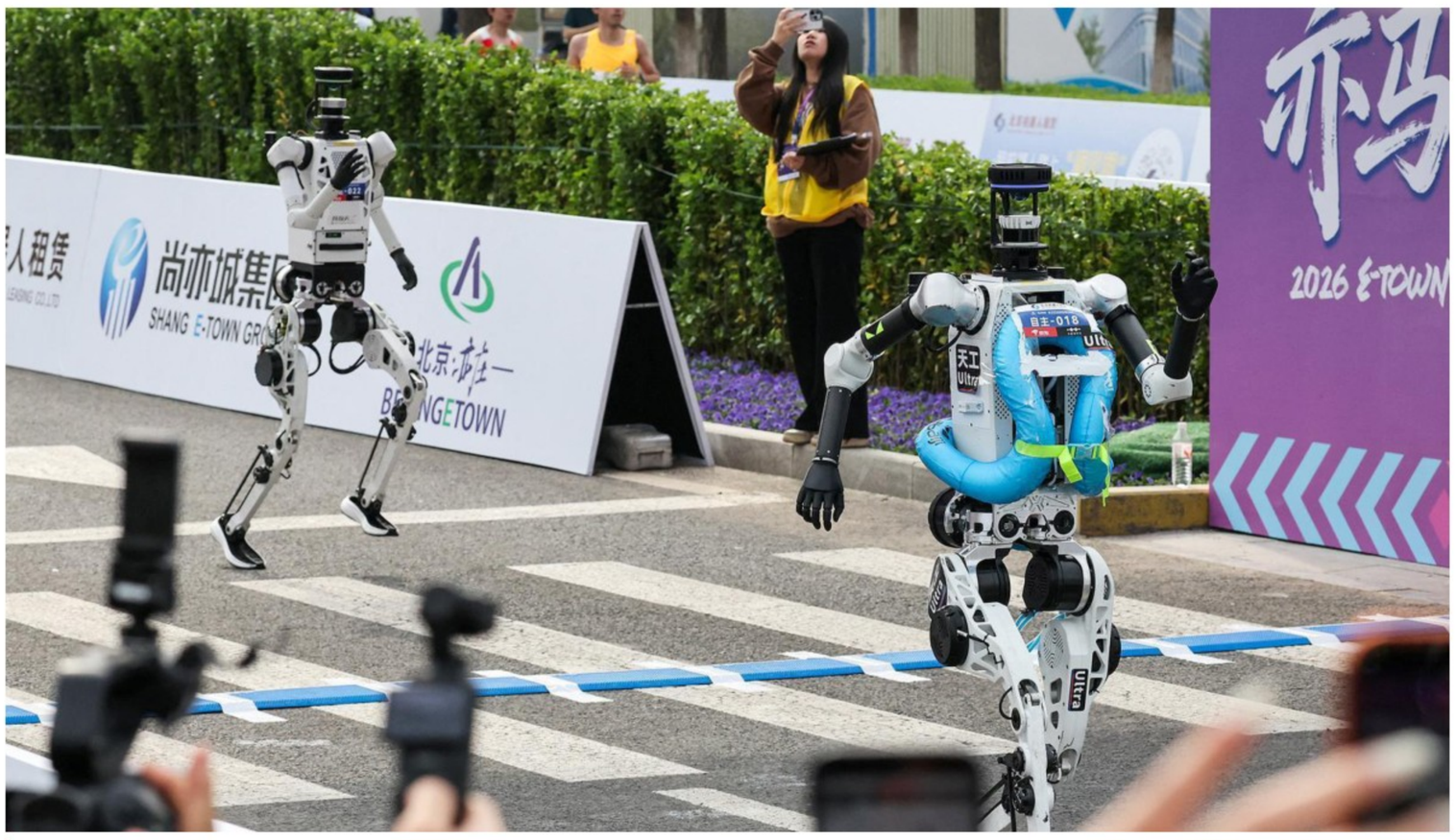
Scientists are reconsidering a long-held assumption — that the only way to fight malaria is to kill mosquitoes

One recent study published in *Nature* demonstrated for the first time that genetically modified mosquitoes can block malaria parasites circulating in endemic African settings

Using the gene-editing tool CRISPR–Cas9, scientists designed a genetic system that copied itself onto the partner chromosome during reproduction. As a result, far more than half of the offspring inherited the modified gene, often over 90%

The results of the study support population modification as a realistic alternative to population suppression, with potentially fewer ecological risks as it doesn't aim to eliminate an entire species

BIG SHOT



The Tiangong Ultra 2025 humanoid robot approaches the finish line of the second Beijing E-Town Half Marathon and Humanoid Robot Half Marathon in Beijing, China on Sunday. REUTERS

QUESTION CORNER

A weakening wind

Q: How is global warming affecting the sea-land breeze?

A: During the day, land heats faster than the sea, pulling cool air onshore. At night, the land cools faster, so the air flows offshore. This is called the sea-land breeze.

A new study in *Nature Climate Change* has reported that as the oceans become warmer, the sea-land breezes around coastal megacities are becoming weaker. Urban planners consider these breezes to be essential to cool urban areas and improve air quality.

The study authors simulated conditions around 18 major coastal cities, finding that global warming is heating the oceans significantly, thus reducing the thermal contrast — the temperature difference between the land and the sea — significantly. Since the sea-land breeze is driven by this temperature gap, the breeze becomes weaker and occurs less often.

The analysis also showed that historical ocean warming has reduced the number of breeze days by 3% in most of the cities the team studied. Mid-latitude cities such as London, New York, Shanghai, and Buenos Aires have had the most dramatic declines.

Ocean warming has reduced the number of breeze days by 3% in Mumbai. UNSPLASH

Looking ahead to 2050, the study warned that if carbon emissions remain high, these breezes could potentially weaken 4.5-times faster than historical rates. They concluded that this 'erosion' of sea breeze is an overlooked threat to the health and habitability of coastal cities as it could lead to more intense urban heat and worse air pollution.

For feedback and suggestions
for 'Science', please write to **science@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Daily page'

West Asia crisis: Rising bitumen cost impacts road project works

The GBA has decided to extend the deadline, as a result several projects will not be completed before monsoon

Chetan B.C.
BENGALURU

According to GBA sources, the impact of the West Asia conflict has disrupted bitumen supply, and its aftermath has led to fluctuating price ranges, further affecting road works. K. MURALI KUMAR

In a bid to prevent projects from stalling due to fluctuating bitumen prices owing to the West Asia crisis, the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) has invoked the star rate system for construction materials, limited to bitumen, cement, and steel. The Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) is also likely to adopt the same method, including for completing pending works at Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Layout (NPKL).

In addition, the GBA has decided to extend the deadline of projects affected by disruptions by 33 days. This essentially means that several projects will not be completed by the onset of the monsoon, which was the deadline set by Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar for all road works.

Under this system, the GBA will bear the fluctuating cost (any increase over the quoted contract sum) of bitumen and other construction materials for projects with total estimates above ₹50 lakh and below ₹1 crore.

Fluctuating prices

According to GBA sources, the impact of the West Asia conflict has disrupted bitumen supply, and its aftermath has led to fluctuating price ranges, further affecting road works. Bitumen is a key component in road laying and repair works, as it is used as a binding material. India imports crude oil, and bitumen, derived from petroleum, from Gulf countries.

The actual price of bitumen is estimated at ₹45,000 per tonne, according to official estimates. Due to the shortage, prices have fluctuated between ₹50,000 and ₹90,000, with the highest reaching ₹95,000 during the last week of March. Currently, the price is varying around ₹70,000.

Works slow down

The City Corporations have tendered more than 70% of the total roadworks after December 2025. These works are currently ongoing, while some were scheduled to begin last month. All these works have slowed down.

The major impact has been on ward roads and sub-arterial roads. These works were taken up under the Chief Minister's Infrastructure Development Funds and were scheduled to be completed before the monsoon so that pothole issues and drain overflow problems could be addressed.

However, to ensure that these works are not halted for a prolonged period, which would impact commuting in the city during the rains, the GBA has decided to step in.

On the other hand, the BDA, which has been asked to pay compensation to a site holder for delays in providing basic infrastructure at NPKL, has also been affected by the disruption in bitumen supply. A BDA source said that work on a few stretches in NPKL that remains incomplete has been halted due to a shortage of bitumen. "We will take a decision on invoking star rates in our next board meeting and finish off the remaining works," the source said.

Star rates

In a circular, the GBA has instructed chief engineers of all corporations to invoke star rates for eligible materials. The letter cites the Government Order of 2008, which outlines the use of star rates. According to the order, if a project takes more than six months and up to 12 months to complete and costs more than ₹50 lakh, the contractor is eligible for additional payment based on changes in the prices of certain materials.

This price adjustment is calculated using the all India average wholesale price index for these materials. The change in payment depends on how much prices have increased or decreased between the last date for submitting bids and the actual time the work is carried out.

G.M. Nanda Kumar, chief secretary of the Karnataka State Contractors' Association, told *The Hindu* that they had written to the GBA to address contractors' concerns, following which the civic authority agreed to invoke star rates.

"At the time of the contract, the price of bitumen was ₹45,000, and now it is varying substantially. This places a significant burden on contractors, who would have to invest more than the quoted amount, leading to losses. So we requested the invocation of star rates," he said.

The GBA officials are also concerned that contractors might use low-quality materials to bridge the cost gap and maintain profits. To ensure both quality and timely completion of work, the GBA has invoked the star rate system, officials said.

Export disruption hits 'Bangalore Rose' onion; MP seeks Centre's support

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The 'Bangalore Rose' onion is a distinctive, small, pungent, scarlet-red bulb variety primarily cultivated in Karnataka's Chickballapur, Kolar and Bengaluru Rural districts. FILE PHOTO

MP for Chickballapur K. Sudhakar has urged the Union government to intervene immediately, stating that farmers cultivating the geographically indicated (GI) 'Bangalore Rose' onion are facing severe market distress.

The 'Bangalore Rose' onion is a distinctive, small, pungent, scarlet-red bulb variety primarily cultivated in Karnataka's Chickballapur, Kolar and Bengaluru Rural districts.

According to Dr. Sudhakar, the crisis follows ongoing geopolitical disruption in West Asia, which has significantly constrained export supply chains for the 'Bangalore Rose' onion crop, which is traditionally export-oriented. This has led to a steep fall in prices as the rates have plummeted from ₹1,200 to ₹1,500 per bag to below ₹100, leaving farmers in acute financial distress, Dr. Sudhakar said.

"The situation has caused acute financial distress to farmers. Large quantities of perishable produce remain unsold, further aggravating the situation," he said.

In a letter to Union Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Dr. Sudhakar has urged the Centre to step in with immediate market support measures. He has called for procurement interventions to prevent distress in sales and stabilise prices. In a separate communication to Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal, the MP has sought urgent steps to open up alternative export markets. He has also emphasised the need for logistical support and export incentives to revive the crop's viability.

> Large quantities of perishable produce remain unsold, further aggravating the situation
>
> **K. SUDHAKAR**
> MP for Chickballapur

Highlighting long-term solutions, Dr. Sudhakar has proposed the development of processing infrastructure in the region, including dehydration and pickling units under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana (PMKSY). He noted that such measures would reduce dependence on raw exports and provide value addition opportunities for farmers.

However, farmers in Chickballapur noted that the crop was exported to Southeast Asia. "We do have a disrupted market, as the price has fallen to ₹200 per bag of 50 kg as against ₹800 last year. Some of us have not harvested and have left it as it is. A few have harvested and threw them on roads as a sign of protest," said Venkata Reddy, a farmer from Chelur in Chickballapur.

However, he acknowledged that there is a need for establishing dehydration and pickling units. "Even the hoarding infrastructure is very small and limited to a few farmers. We need a bigger storage facility for our district," he said.

Sewage sludge to be converted into biogas

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) will be implementing a biogas upgrading project to convert sewage sludge into Compressed Bio-Gas, with an estimated additional revenue potential of around ₹120 crore over the next 20 years, a release stated.

BWSSB Chairman Ram Prasath Manohar said that the project would cover five major sewage treatment plants (STPs) in the city and was proposed to be used either for injection into the City Gas Distribution Network or as a cleaner transport fuel, the release stated. "At present, most of the STPs use biogas for in-situ electricity generation, while one facility reportedly flares the gas," he added.

The project will be implemented under a Public-Private Partnership model. The private concessionaire will invest the entire capital expenditure of about ₹85 crore and will also handle operations and maintenance, while the BWSSB will provide around 13,000 sq metres of land, the release added.

Phase-2 elevated corridors likely to be delayed by two years

Chetan B.C.
BENGALURU

Authorities found that the Passenger Car Unit of the stretch does not meet the required levels to operate and generate profit. The projected cash flow after construction is negative. FILE PHOTO

The second phase of the elevated corridors project, which involves constructing two flyovers stretching 44.5 km, is unlikely to commence for at least two years due to operational constraints.

The two flyovers are the Nagawara Junction to Bagaluru Main Road, spanning 17.3 km, and the Mother Teresa Circle (Ulsoor Lake Junction) to Bagaluru Village stretch, spanning about 27.2 km.

As B.S. Prahallad, Technical Director, Bengaluru Smart Infrastructure Limited (B-SMILE), puts it, the stretches are not 'mature', meaning that the current vehicular movement on these stretches does not permit the construction of flyovers under the Build, Operate, Own, and Transfer (BOOT) model. According to the B-SMILE sources, these two stretches are planned to be built under the BOOT model, where the concessionaire will operate the stretch (collect toll) for a specific period to recover construction costs and earn profit, after which it will be handed over to the civic body.

Required levels not met

"After preparing Detailed Project Reports (DPRs), we found that the Passenger Car Unit (PCU) of the stretch does not meet the required levels to operate and generate profit. The projected cash flow after construction is negative," Mr. Prahallad told *The Hindu*. In simpler terms, vehicular movement along these stretches is limited and will not generate enough revenue to cover construction costs for the concessionaire within the stipulated time.

Therefore, the BOOT model, preferred by the government for big ticket projects, will not work for the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) to implement these long stretches. In fact, estimates indicate negative cash outflow for the next 10 years, B-SMILE sources said.

To be reviewed again

However, Mr. Prahallad said the two stretches would be reviewed again after a year and a half to assess changes in commuting patterns and growth in specific areas, particularly in the northeastern parts of the city, to implement the project.

The 17.30-km stretch between Nagawara Junction and Bagaluru Main Road is planned to pass through R.K. Hegde Nagar, Sampigehalli, Tirumenahalli, and Bellahalli. The other stretch, between Mother Teresa Circle and Bagaluru Village (New Airport Road), is set to pass via Assaye Road, Buddha Vihar Road, Hennur Road, Bagalur Road, and Kannuru.

Timings
BENGALURU

MONDAY, APR. 20		
RISE	06:04	SET 18:33
RISE	08:16	SET 21:43
TUESDAY, APR. 21		
RISE	06:04	SET 18:33
RISE	09:19	SET 22:49
WEDNESDAY, APR. 22		
RISE	06:03	SET 18:33
RISE	10:23	SET 23:50

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	34	15
Mysuru	36	21
Bengaluru	36	24

Bengaluru Today
36°C The weather will be dry. Day will be hot and uneasy. Night will be pleasant.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
37°C Morning will be pleasant. Day will be hot and uneasy. Night also will be pleasant. Dry weather to occur.

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THE HINDU
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Schools part of *The Hindu's* Newspaper in Education excel in CBSE results in Bengaluru

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Schools that are part of *The Hindu's* Newspaper in Education (NiE) programme are in a celebratory mood as they have secured excellent results in the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) examinations announced recently.

JSS Public School, HSR Layout: The topper was Chinmayee A.V. with 99% and second topper was Abhijit S. Kamateiyh with 98.6%. As many as 104 students appeared for the examination and 45 got above 90%.

Freedom International School, HSR Layout: Kanieshk Harishankar emerged topper with 98.6%. As many as 97 students appeared for the exam and 95 students got distinction. National Public School, Indiranagar: The school got an average of 89.96%, with 75 out of 121 students scoring 90% and above. In Grade 10, students have achieved 54 centums in different subjects. Swati Goel stood first with 99.4%, and Dhruvank Kamlesh Dholariya came second with 99%. Mili Rajesh stood third at 98.8%.

National Public School, Koramangala: Number of students who appeared for the exam was 94, of which 90 got distinction and four got first class. The topper was Sreejani Bhaduri at 99.6%.

Auden School, Banashankari 3rd stage: Forty students appeared for the exam, of which 36 got distinction, and four first class. Sudhanva S. Ritti was topper with 96.4%.

JSS Public School, Banashankari II Stage: 104 students appeared for the exam. Of whom 87 got distinctions, 17 got first class, achieving 100% results. Toppers were Satvik Shastry and Adarsh S. with 98.4% each. Niriksha V. Abbur got 97.4% and Vibha Naga Siddharth got 97.2%.

Jaigopal Garodia Rastrotthana Vidya Kendra, Ramamurthynagar: A total of 212 students appeared for the exam. Fifteen students scored above 95%, while 34 students secured between 91% and 94%, and 58 students scored between 85% and 90%. Satvik Bathineni and Ramanathan Alagappan emerged as the toppers with 98.2% each. SFS Academy, Electronics City: A total of 150 students appeared for the exam. As many as 143 students secured distinction, while seven students passed with first class. Lekhana Surisetty emerged as the topper with 99.20%.

JSS Public School, HBR Layout: 49 students appeared for the exam. Seven students scored above 90%, while 33 students secured distinction. Adarsh Krishna J. emerged as the topper with 96.6%, followed by Pooja P. with 95.4%.

Mahila Seva Samaja Senior Secondary School, Basavanagudi**:** A total of 53 students appeared for the exam. As many as 18 students secured distinction, while 34 students passed with first class. Dhathri P. Vittal emerged as the topper with 96.8%.

Army Public School, K. Kamaraj Road, Bangalore (560042): A total of 219 students appeared for the exam. As many as 157 students secured distinction, while 60 students passed with first class. P.S. Bargav Yajvan and Aadya Singh emerged as the toppers with 97.80% each.

SJR Public School, 3rd Block, 7th Main, 1st Stage, Kalyan Nagar, HBR Layout, Bengaluru: A total of 102 students appeared for the exam. As many as 33 students secured distinction, while 55 students passed with first class. Sanvi Agrawal and Pranita Sudhir emerged as the toppers with 98% each.

BGS National Public School, Bannerghatta Road, Hulimavu, Bengaluru: 418 students appeared for the exam. As many as 181 students scored 90% and above, while 146 students secured between 80% and 89.90%. Anagha Kogganuru Sanjeeva Kumar and Samhith Rajesh Matta emerged as the toppers with 98.8% each.

Anti-drug panels to be set up in schools, colleges

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

In an effort to effectively curb the drug menace, the North-East Division police have decided to set up Anti-Drug Committees in every educational institution, headed by the principal with a senior teacher as nodal officer, and comprising students, police personnel, excise officials, NGO representatives and a doctor.

The decision was taken at a meeting held by Mithun Kumar G.K., Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), north east division, on Sunday.

Principals, teachers, students and parents from various institutions across the division participated in the meeting. Officials said that the committees would monitor drug consumption and trafficking, with liaison officers conducting monthly visits and a WhatsApp helpline enabling sharing of information with assured confidentiality.

Authorities flagged the rising involvement of students in drug-related cases and urged parents and teachers to remain vigilant. Institutions have been asked to display details of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act and conduct regular awareness programmes.

The police said surveillance around schools and colleges would be intensified, with surprise checks of nearby shops, hostels and PGs, and similar committees would be formed in such facilities.

Emphasising "prevention, awareness and early intervention", officials said strict action would be taken against offenders while focusing on reforming students.

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Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Number of makeshift homes destroyed in Malaysia's Sabah

1,000 A huge fire destroyed about 1,000 makeshift homes and displaced thousands of people in a coastal village in Malaysia's Sabah state on Sunday. The blaze broke out early on Sunday in a "water village" in Sandakan district in Sabah's northeast. PTI

Unlawful social media posts acted upon by Election Commission

11,000 The EC said it has taken action against 11,000 "unlawful" social media posts related to the polls. It said that any manipulated content has to be acted upon within three hours of being brought to the notice of the platforms. PTI

Drivers prosecuted for drunk driving in Delhi so far in 2026

7,478 Delhi Traffic Police booked 269 people for drunk driving during a special integrated night checking across the national capital. The three-hour operation was conducted as part of an ongoing campaign against driving under the influence of alcohol. PTI

Artisans trained on the use of AI under PM Vishwakarma scheme

2,500 The Ministry of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises on Sunday said over 2,500 beneficiaries have been trained on the use of AI tools under the PM Vishwakarma Scheme to improve their livelihoods and business potential. PTI

Number of complaints received by J&K ACB in the last six years

23,798 According to data provided by the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) in reply to an RTI query, in the last six years, the ACB received a massive volume of 23,798 complaints. PTI

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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On delimitation and Parliament seats

What is delimitation, and how does it work in India? What changes were proposed in the 131st Constitutional Amendment Bill? Why was an increase in Lok Sabha seats proposed? What concerns did the Opposition raise against the Bills? What is the way forward?

EXPLAINER

Rangarajan R.

The story so far:
The Union government had introduced the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill to increase the maximum number of Lok Sabha seats from the existing 550 to 850. It had also introduced a Bill to set up the Delimitation Commission in 2026. However, the Constitution Amendment Bill was defeated in the Lok Sabha, and thereafter, the Delimitation Bill was withdrawn by the government.

What are the existing provisions?
Delimitation refers to the process of fixing the number of seats and the boundaries of territorial constituencies in each State for the Lok Sabha and Legislative Assemblies. This exercise is carried out by a Delimitation Commission set up through an Act of Parliament. Such exercises have previously been conducted based on the 1951, 1961, and 1971 Censuses. The number of Lok Sabha seats, based on the 1971 Census, was fixed at 543 when the population was 54.8 crore. The number has been frozen, based on the 1971 Census, to encourage population control measures. As per the current constitutional provisions, this number is to be readjusted based on the 2027 Census.

In 2023, through the 106th Constitutional Amendment, Parliament provided for one-third reservation of seats for women in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies. This would be through delimitation based on the next Census.

What are the Bills?
The 131st Constitution Amendment Bill proposed three key changes. First, to increase the maximum number of Lok Sabha seats from 550 to 850. Second, to empower Parliament to determine the Census based on which delimitation would be carried out. Third, to delink one-third reservation for women from the next Census in 2027 and to enable the same based on delimitation as per the last published Census of 2011.

The Bill proposed to increase the maximum number of Lok Sabha seats from 550 to 850. PTI

The Delimitation Bill, 2026, provided for the setting up of a Delimitation Commission from time to time by the Union government. This Commission would allocate Lok Sabha seats among the States and Union Territories based on the latest Census figures. Had the Bill been passed and a Commission immediately constituted, the allocation would have been based on the 2011 Census.

What are the issues?
The government argued that increasing the number of Lok Sabha seats by around 50% (from 543 to 816) would enable the seamless implementation of one-third reservation for women in an expanded House. This would have resulted in approximately 272 seats being reserved for women.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah gave an oral assurance that the number of seats in each State and Union Territory would be increased by 50% on a pro-rata basis, thereby not altering the current proportion of their representation in the total strength of the Lok Sabha.

However, the Opposition raised several objections. Firstly, there was no need to bundle women's reservations with delimitation. The 106th amendment in 2023 enables one-third reservation for women within the existing 543 seats. Second, the draft Bills did not contain an explicit provision for a pro-rata 50% increase in seats for each State or Union Territory. In fact, the Delimitation Bill provided that the allocation of seats would be as per the latest Census population. Third, the Opposition contended that such an important and sensitive subject requires detailed discussions and should not be rushed through in a brief session.

What can be the way forward?
Democracy implies government by the people. It follows that the government is elected by the majority with the broad principle of 'one citizen-one vote-one value'. This principle has been diluted in the interest of population control since 1976, when the delimitation exercise was frozen based on the 1971 Census. Given the federal nature of India's polity, the next delimitation process has to take into consideration the variation in population growth across States.

Mr. Shah offered to include an explicit provision to guarantee a 50% pro-rata increase in seats for each State and Union Territory. It was unclear whether this would have been provided in the Constitution Amendment or the Delimitation Bill. If it had been provided in the Constitutional Amendment, any future changes for the same could have been effected only by a two-thirds majority. However, if it had been provided in the Delimitation Bill, amendments could be made by a simple majority.

Article 81(2) of the Constitution provides that the ratio between the number of seats and the population of each State should, as far as practicable, be the same across States. While a 50% pro-rata increase may offer a middle ground between democratic and federal principles, it would still be appropriate to discuss the same in more detail through parliamentary committees. The other urgent reform needed in our democracy is to empower the local bodies of Panchayats and Municipalities, which engage with the citizens on a daily basis.

(Rangarajan R. is a former IAS officer and author of 'Polity Simplified'. He currently trains civil-service aspirants at 'Officers IAS Academy'. Views expressed are personal)

THE GIST

- The proposed increase in Lok Sabha seats and changes to delimitation faced political opposition and were defeated in Parliament.
- The core issue remains balancing "'one citizen-one vote-one value" with federal concerns, requiring wider consensus and detailed parliamentary scrutiny.

What does U.P.'s minimum wage revision change?

How does the new wage structure balance worker welfare and industrial stability?

Vikram Karuna

The story so far:
The Uttar Pradesh government issued a crucial notification on April 17, in regard to the revision of minimum wages in the State as an interim step, with retrospective effect from April 1, 2026. This move comes in the backdrop of labour unrest in industrial areas such as Noida and Ghaziabad.

These incidents were not isolated, highlighting concerns of wage stagnation, rising cost of living, and disparities in wages when compared with other industrialised States. In response, the State government established a High-Level Committee comprising senior officers, worker representatives and employers from industrial zones. The committee's consultations and suggestions provided the basis of the notification.

What are the key features of the notification?
The notification revises existing minimum wage rates under the Minimum Wages Act, 1948, using powers under the United Provinces Industrial Disputes Act, 1947. An important provision is the division of the State into three categories, depending upon geographical and economic factors.

Gautam Buddha Nagar and Ghaziabad are categorised as Category I due to their being areas where industrial activity is concentrated and the cost of living. Category II encompasses districts with municipal corporations, while Category III contains the rest. In each case, wages are set based on skill levels – unskilled, semi-skilled, and skilled. The wage structure comprises a basic amount and a Variable Dearness Allowance (VDA). For example, in Category I, monthly wages are fixed at ₹13,690 for unskilled labour, ₹15,059 for semi-skilled labour, and ₹16,868 for skilled labour. The same rates apply for Categories II and III, but with some reduction in the amount of wages paid in the latter cases.

The introduction of the Variable Dearness Allowance ensures the flexibility of wages against any inflationary pressure, while the revision of the basic wage rate corrects structural deficiencies in wages.

Notably, the rates specified in the notice are interim in nature.

What is the legal and economic basis for wage determination?
The determination of minimum wages in the State of Uttar Pradesh involves statutory considerations that blend legal requirements with economic factors. Under the Minimum Wages Act, minimum wages are reviewed periodically, taking into account the All-India Consumer Price Index (CPI). The Variable Dearness Allowance is directly tied to fluctuations in CPI, ensuring that real wages do not lose value due to inflation.

The 2026 notification underscores a key challenge: delays in wage revisions that ought to be conducted at regular intervals. The minimum wages were supposed to be revised based on the averages of CPI in 2017 and 2023 during 2019 and 2024, respectively; however, this did not happen, leading to a widening gap between actual wages and inflation-adjusted wage levels.

The CPI, for instance, increased to an average of 425 by 2025 when compared to the previous index of 216. In other words, the present revision is aimed at responding to current economic realities while simultaneously rectifying a long-standing problem that occurred in previous years. The framework also finds its place in the larger scheme of the Code on Wages, 2019. While it is true that the Code on Wages aims to update and modernise wage regulations in India, it provides legal support to the existing tri-level categorisation of minimum wages. It gives State governments the authority to fix differential minimum wages, taking into consideration regional variations, cost of living, and type of employment. Furthermore, a national floor wage system is planned to be introduced in the future, which would enable wage harmonisation across States.

What are the implications?
The implications of such a revision are numerous and diverse. Firstly, for workers in the industrial cluster, it offers partial relief by improving incomes and easing cost-of-living pressures, though questions remain on whether it meets the standard of a living wage. Secondly, the revision involves increasing labour costs for employers, potentially resulting in loss of profits. Thirdly, for the State, the key challenge lies in effective implementation, which might prove rather problematic considering the existence of informal sectors with weak regulation.

Since the notification is interim, further reforms are expected, including the establishment of the Wage Board and State rules under the Code on Wages. However, further actions are needed, including the creation of an effective wage system based on solid data.

(Vikram Karuna is an Assistant Professor at the School of Law, Justice & Governance, Gautam Buddha University, Greater Noida)

THE GIST

- The Uttar Pradesh government issued an interim notification revising minimum wages in response to worker disturbances, wage stagnation, and rising cost of living, based on recommendations of a High-Level Committee.
- The new wage structure, linked to the Consumer Price Index through Variable Dearness Allowance, seeks to correct delays in wage revision while balancing worker relief, employer costs, and implementation challenges.

No respite from summer heat as 5 districts cross 40°C

The India Meteorological Department predicts that no large change in maximum temperature is expected over north interior Karnataka during the next five days

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

There seems to be no respite from the intense summer heat as five districts in the State recorded a maximum temperature of more than 40°C on Sunday.

According to data from the India Meteorological Department (IMD), four districts in north interior Karnataka and one district in south interior Karnataka saw the mercury rising above the 40°C mark.

In north interior Karnataka, Kalaburagi recorded a maximum of 41.7°C against the normal maximum temperature of 40.2°C with a departure of 1.5°C.

Bidar recorded a maximum of 41.6°C against the normal maximum temperature of 38.6°C with a departure of 3.0°C.

Raichur recorded a maximum of 41.4°C against the normal maximum temperature of 39.9°C with a departure of 1.5°C. Koppal recorded a maximum of 40.4°C against the normal maximum temperature of 38°C with a departure of 2.4°C.

However, the Koppal All Weather Station (AWS) recorded a maximum of 43.2°C. In south interior Karnataka, Ballari (Hagari KVK) AWS recorded 40.9°C.

The maximum temperature was above the 35°C mark in the remaining districts of the State, barring a few in the coastal region along with Chikkamagaluru, Shivamogga and Haveri districts.

Forecast

The IMD forecast for the next five days indicates no significant change in maximum temperatures over coastal Karnataka, with hot and humid conditions likely to persist.

"No large change in maximum temperature is expected over north interior Karnataka during the next five days. Thunderstorms with gusty winds of 40 to 50 kmph are likely to occur at one or two places over north interior Karnataka from April 19 to April 23. Hailstorms with gusty winds (40 to 50 kmph) are also likely to occur over north interior Karnataka from April 19," the IMD stated.

It added that in south interior Karnataka, there would be no large change in maximum temperature for the next five days. "Thunderstorms with gusty wind with speed 30 to 40 kmph are likely to occur at one or two places over south interior Karnataka till April 23," it said.

The 2026 southwest monsoon seasonal rainfall (June to September) across Karnataka is expected to be below normal over most parts of the State. However, some regions in northeast and southeast interior Karnataka are likely to receive normal to above-normal rainfall.

Data from the IMD shows five districts across north and south interior Karnataka recording the mercury rising above the 40°C mark on Sunday. FILE PHOTO

DMK has caused injustice to other southern States: HDK

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Union Minister for Industries and Steel H.D. Kumaraswamy on Sunday accused the DMK of causing injustice to other southern States due to its political expediency, by opposing the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill.

"The DMK, after initially expressing support for key Constitution Amendment Bills, subsequently reversed its position, thereby depriving southern States of a significant and beneficial opportunity," he told reporters in Delhi. The DMK and the Congress have been creating unwarranted confusion and apprehension among the public on the issue, he added.

H.D. Kumaraswamy. FILE PHOTO

Pointing to the meeting convened by Union Home Minister Amit Shah in the third week of March, the Union Minister said that all parties had been apprised of the Women's Reservation Bill and delimitation proposals. "The DMK had agreed, and the Samajwadi Party did not oppose then. In fact, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin even suggested convening a Parliament session in June. However, DMK later withdrew support due to political considerations and it has caused disadvantage to the region."

Mr. Kumaraswamy dismissed allegations that delimitation would be unjust to southern States as unfounded. If the proposals were indeed detrimental, why did the Chief Ministers of Karnataka, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh not raise objections? he asked. Despite Mr. Shah presenting the details of delimitation comprehensively in Parliament, the Congress, driven by political motives, misled its allies and the public, thereby derailing a significant reform, he alleged.

"As a representative of the southern States, I state unequivocally that no injustice would have arisen from delimitation. On the contrary, a valuable opportunity has been lost due to the DMK's selfish actions," he said. He said that Congress and allies set a deliberate narrative to misrepresent the impact on northern States, and accused the DMK of prioritising political calculations over national interest and of diverting public attention for electoral advantage. Mr. Kumaraswamy attacked the Congress for questioning institutional processes, and stated that such a stance reflects a lack of faith in established democratic mechanisms.

Union Minister dismisses speculation over Zameer

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Janata Dal (Secular) leader and Union Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy on Sunday dismissed speculation over Housing Minister B.Z. Zameer Ahmed Khan rejoining the JD(S). He said that such discussions have not taken place. "Decisions regarding party expansion would be taken independently and judiciously. The JD(S) will not repeat past mistakes or seek to capitalise on political instability in other parties. The party remains committed to responsible and value-based politics."

PM playing politics in the name of women's reservation: CM

The Hindu Bureau
BELAGAVI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is playing politics in the name of women's reservation, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said in Ranebennur in Haveri district on Sunday.

He was launching several development works.

Mr. Siddaramaiah said the Prime Minister is trying to blame the party "only for political benefit as there are elections in States like Tamil Nadu and West Bengal".

"The Congress has never been opposed to women's reservation. Former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi introduced 33% reservation in urban and rural local bodies through the 73rd and 74th amendments of the Constitution. When the NDA government introduced the Women's Reservation Bill in Parliament, the Congress wholeheartedly supported it,'' he told reporters.

Mr. Siddaramaiah further said the BJP is not interested in the quota, but in the delimitation exercise.

"In fact, the Prime Minister should have taken steps to implement women's reservation, based on the 2023 Bill that was passed with 450 votes. Why was it not implemented? That is because the BJP is not interested in women's reservation. It is interested in delimitation that protects its interests,'' he said.

Mr. Siddaramaiah said that the delimitation exercise being introduced by the Centre, in its present form, would be extremely unfair to southern States.

"The Prime Minister and other ministers are going around saying the number of seats in all States will increase by 50%. If that happens, then the seats in Uttar Pradesh will increase to over 120, from the current 80. But smaller States like Karnataka that have followed proactive policies to stabilise population, will suffer. Karnataka will have only 42 seats. The relative strength of various States in the Parliament will damage the interests of smaller States that have followed progressive policies and schemes,'' Mr. Siddaramaiah said.

Constitution Amendment Bill moved in haste, without consultation: DKS

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Terming the defeat of the Constitution Amendment Bill in Parliament as a humiliation to the BJP-led NDA government and a victory to the Congress-led INDIA bloc, Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Sunday said the BJP had moved the Bill hastily and without broader consultation with the Opposition.

"When amending the Constitution, everyone should have been taken into confidence. The Women's Reservation Act is Congress's dream. It was the Congress that had worked in favour of the Act," the Deputy Chief Minister told presspersons here. He said, "In a democratic system, discussions should have been held with Opposition parties. What was the need to bring it at a time when elections are ongoing? The decision made now by the BJP government is not the right time." He also decried attempts – through the Bill – by the BJP to allegedly reduce representation from the South and increase representation in the North.

On the BJP's protest against the Opposition parties, Mr. Shivakumar said: "They (the BJP) are the ones who brought the Bill knowing well that it would be defeated. They are anti-women. Are we not all representatives in a democracy? Were they not elected by the people? They should have spoken about this and held discussions. The Women's Reservation Bill is not their property, but belongs to the nation."

Referring to former Prime Minister Rajeev Gandhi's contribution towards reservation to women, he said: "The Women's Reservation Bill had been earlier passed in the Rajya Sabha under the leadership of (Congress leader) Sonia Gandhi." He said that it was a great victory for the struggles of Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi.

Ministers come to CM's defence amid party dissent

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Ministers Satish Jarkiholi and M.B. Patil have come to the defence of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, who has come under attack from his loyalist and former Minister K.N. Rajanna over the handling of Muslim leaders in the party. The former Minister had indicated that the Chief Minister had become helpless after he sacked his political secretary, Naseer Ahmed, and allowed the suspension of MLC Abdul Jabbar.

"Sometimes one needs to compromise for the welfare of the party and the government. But it cannot be construed as being helpless," Public Works Minister Satish Jarkiholi told reporters here on Sunday.

Certain Muslim leaders in the Congress, including Housing Minister B.Z. Zameer Ahmed Khan and MLCs Naseer Ahmed and Abdul Jabbar, have come under a cloud over the handling of the Davangere South Assembly constituency byelection, during which a strong pitch was made for a Muslim candidate. They have been accused of indulging in anti-party activities, and the party has initiated action against the two lawmakers. However, Congress leaders are divided, with several Cabinet Ministers feeling that the action was harsh and hasty.

Defending the Chief Minister, Major Industries Minister M.B. Patil told presspersons in Vijayapura, "The Chief Minister has not become weak. There needs to be some discipline in all issues. Action has to be taken to protect the party's discipline sometimes." He added, "Even if I violate the party's discipline, action will be taken against me."

Meanwhile, Mr. Jarkiholi, Health Minister Dinesh Gundurao and MLC M.C. Venugopal met at the residence of Home Minister G. Parameshwara here on Sunday. Sources close to the Home Minister said that the leaders discussed the developments within the party on the Muslim leadership issue.

CORRIDORS OF POWER

Wake up call

After nearly three years at the helm of the Medical Education Department, Minister Sharana Prakash Patil (*pictured*) has woken up to mounting public grievances over the functioning of government hospitals in the State.

Patients routinely complain about inadequate treatment, medicine shortages, poor ICU management, and lack of cleanliness.

The Minister appears to have acted after the Karnataka Lokayukta flagged the non-availability of medicines in hospitals under his department. Rather than conducting regular inspections to address systemic issues, he has warned hospital heads of action for dereliction of duty.

Dr. Patil has also directed all government hospital and medical college heads to initiate tender processes at least three months in advance.

Whether these measures will address the persistent issues in government hospitals remains to be seen.

No assignments

Despite directions from the High Court of Karnataka and Chief Secretary Shalini Rajneesh, a good number of employees across government departments have been relieved of their posts and are awaiting fresh assignments.

The recent transfer of senior IAS officer Harsh Gupta from the post of Principal Secretary, Health and Family Welfare Department, without an immediate posting has raised fresh concerns.

Similar instances have been reported in the Horticulture Department, where an official remained without a posting for nearly four months after being transferred.

Employees left in limbo are idle and, in some cases, facing delays in receiving salaries until reassignment.

Such a situation does not augur well for the State administration, especially when several vacancies remain unfilled and available personnel are left without assignments, ultimately affecting service delivery to the public.

'Targeting' within

The SDPI has accused the Congress of "targeting" only Muslim leaders in the name of action against "anti-party" activities.

The criticism comes in the wake of disciplinary action taken against two Muslim leaders of the party following the Davangere South Assembly bypolls.

SDPI State president Abdul Majeed said that on several earlier occasions, the Congress had failed to act against its own leaders for similar violations.

Citing instances, he said no action was taken when the late Shamanur Shivashankarappa supported the BJP in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

Mr. Majeed further recalled that during the 2012 Legislative Council elections, present Urban Development Minister Byrathi Suresh had contested as an Independent against Congress candidate Iqbal Ahmed Saradagi, who went on to lose.

Though an internal inquiry found cross-voting by several Congress MLAs, no action was taken against them, he said.

Alleging that the Congress was attempting to divide Muslim leadership within the party, Mr. Majeed warned that such actions could prove costly for the party in the 2028 Assembly elections.

Nagesh Prabhu
Raviprasad Kamila

PUBLIC NOTICE

The landed Property bearing **Sy.No. 99** Gudnahalli Village, Malur Taluk, Kolar District, Karnataka State is the ancestral property of my clients Satish and Srinath and their family members. A case is **O.S. No. 102/2019** is filed against T.S. Ramachandrappa and others, in the court of Senior Civil Judge, Malur T.S. Ramchandrappa has created a Sale deed and given it to Punjab National Bank, Chennai as guarantor. Punjab National Bank has notified for E-auction sale of this property. The E-auction purchasers will not get a lawful title. Therefore Public are requested not to participate in E-auction Sale dated: 28-04-2026.

K.G. Ramakrishnaiah, Advocate
Upstairs, S.F.C.S. Building,
T.G. Extension, Hosakote,
Bengaluru Rural District.

PUBLIC NOTICE

THIS IS TO NOTIFY the General Public that our client proposes to purchase the below mentioned Schedule property from **Mrs. Anuradha Sridhar,** Wife of Mr. B. Sridhar, Residing at: R501 Purva Park, Cox Town, Behind ITC, Cox Town, Bangalore-560005, who has represented that she purchased the Schedule Property from **M/s. Purva Developments** in terms of a **Sale Deed dtd 18/01/2000,** registered as **Document No. 3504/99-2000** in Book-I and stored in C.D No.SNGR CD-10, in the Office of Sub-Registrar Shivajinagar, Bangalore. Persons objecting for the proposed purchase or having any right in the Schedule property may lodge her objections &/or claims with the undersigned along with supporting documentary evidence within **Fifteen days** from the date of this publication and objections &/or claims received thereafter will not be binding on our client & our client will proceed to purchase the Schedule property as if there are no claims/objections.

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All that Two Bedroom Apartment bearing No.5R-1kb (now identified as R-501) in 5th Floor of the Block known as "ORCHID" in the Apartment Building Complex known as "PURVA PARK" & Apartment bearing Municipal No.53/219, PID No.86-63-53/219, Madras Sapper Officers Colony (M.S.O.Colony), Ward No.86, Bangalore, with a super built-up area of 1070 Sq.Ft along with 0.22 % equivalent to 333.45 Sq.Ft of Undivided Share in the land constructed in Property bearing Municipal No.53, situated at Madras Sapper Officers Colony, Doddigunta Village, Kasaba Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, Bangalore.

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Email : chirag.makwana@sterlite.com ,
Contact : +91 9922002328 (CIN – U64201MH2012PLC234316)

TENDER NOTICE

Tender Doc no: MTCIL/TENDER/ACTIVE -OPGW/22
MTCIL is a Joint Venture Company between Sterlite Electric Ltd. (SEL) & Maharashtra State Electricity Transmission Company Limited (MSETCL). It has been formed with the objective of establishing OPGW cable based Communication Network in Maharashtra on existing EHV transmission lines of MSETCL and will exploit the same commercially as a Telecom Infrastructure Provider.
Maharashtra State Electricity Transmission Company Limited (MTCIL) is inviting request for proposal from interested bidders for Design, supply, installation, commissioning, integration, testing and handover of a communication network including SDH, PDH, Tele-protection equipment and other subsystems in MTCIL Network. The proposed network shall cover 109 Nos transmission substations on OPGW network of 2000 Km in Maharashtra State.
Interested bidders may obtain the bid documents in person/ by courier / post by sending request letter at above mentioned address and a Bid document fee of Rs 10,000/- through DD in favor of "Maharashtra Transmission Communication Infrastructure Ltd "payable at Mumbai on or before 11th May 2026, 15.00 Hrs.

Scope of Work,	Qty. in Nos	Date of Pre-bid Conference	Last date of seeking clarifications	Last date of Bid Submission
Design, supply, installation, commissioning, integration, testing and handover of a communication network including SDH, PDH, Tele-protection equipment and other subsystems in MTCIL Network.	109	27th April 2026 15.00 Hrs.	04th May 2026 18.00 Hrs.	11th May 2026 15.00 Hrs.

Mumbai
20th April 2026
SCM Head

CACHE

How AI companies are quietly becoming the world's cybersecurity gatekeepers

Anthropic's Project Glasswing looks noble on the surface; but it is essentially a cartel of the most powerful technology companies that get to decide who can access the most capable cybersecurity tools ever built

John Xavier

When Anthropic launched Project Glasswing earlier this month, it did so with the kind of announcement that sounded like public service and read like a market consolidation.

The initiative brought together Amazon Web Services (AWS), Apple, Broadcom, Cisco, CrowdStrike, Google, JPMorgan Chase, the Linux Foundation, Microsoft, Nvidia, and Palo Alto Networks – essentially the who's who of the global technology industry – under a single coordinated effort to secure the world's most critical software using an unreleased AI model called Claude Mythos Preview.

On the surface, it is a noble coalition. But looked at from another angle, it is a cartel of the most powerful technology companies on earth jointly deciding who gets access to the most capable cyber tools ever built.

Mythos Preview, Anthropic's new frontier model, has demonstrated an ability to find and exploit vulnerabilities hidden for decades in software that powers everything from operating systems to web browsers to the open-source code underpinning much of the internet.

Mythos Preview, Anthropic's new frontier model, has demonstrated an ability to find and exploit vulnerabilities hidden for decades in software. REUTERS

Exploiting hidden weakness

To understand why this matters, a brief explanation of the terminology is useful. A "zero-day vulnerability" is a flaw in software that nobody knew existed until someone spots it, and so developers have zero days to fix it. An "exploit" is the actual weapon built from that flaw, a piece of code that lets an attacker break into a system, steal data, or crash critical services.

Previously, finding zero-days and turning them into working exploits required expert human researchers working for days or weeks. Mythos Preview, according to Anthropic's own technical documentation, can do both autonomously, overnight, and at a fraction of the cost.

Anthropic claims the model identified a 27-year-old flaw in OpenBSD, an operating system specifically built with security as its primary design principle. It found a 16-year-old bug in FFmpeg, a video processing library so widely used and so thoroughly tested that research papers have been dedicated to how best to audit it. In one case, automated testing tools analysed a vulnerable line of code five million times over the years and missed it entirely. But Mythos Preview spotted it.

Anthropic says its model has already surfaced thousands of critical vulnerabilities and is still working through an extensive list of open-source codebases.

Building a cyber defence network

The stated mission of Project Glasswing is defensive: find bugs before bad actors do, notify developers, and fund open-source maintainers, who are usually independent programmers who need time and resources to fix flaws in the software.

Anthropic has committed $2.5 million to the Open Source Security Foundation and Alpha-Omega, and $1.5 million to the Apache Software Foundation. Free access to Claude subscriptions is being offered to verified open-source developers.

While these are meaningful gestures, the structure of the initiative raises a pertinent question about why Anthropic has decided, unilaterally, that Mythos Preview will not be made generally available. The most powerful bug-finding tool in existence is being distributed exclusively through a coalition that Anthropic convened and controls. And the companies gathered under Project Glasswing are also the ones best positioned to profit from a software breakdown.

Google's cybersecurity game

This initiative comes less than a month after Google completed its acquisition of Wiz, an Israeli cybersecurity firm, in a $32 billion deal, marking the largest acquisition in the company's history. Wiz built its reputation by offering a platform that scans cloud environments for vulnerabilities and misconfigurations.

Together, Google Cloud and Wiz will now offer what they describe as an AI-powered cybersecurity platform combining Google's Threat Intelligence and Security Operations with Wiz's Cloud Security Platform, designed to detect, prevent, and respond to threats across all environments. The deal positions Google not merely as a cloud provider that happens to offer security tools, but as a vertically integrated security company with the AI backbone to run it.

For Google, the move is widely seen as a way to differentiate its offering through a security-first cloud strategy. In other words, cybersecurity is no longer a feature Google offers alongside its cloud services; it is the competitive differentiator. Microsoft made a similar bet years ago, quietly building its security division into a business that now generates over $20 billion in annual revenue. Vertically integrating cybersecurity into cloud services provides hyperscalers with a new category of enterprise power.

A conspicuous absence

While Google, which offers its own rival model Gemini, is a part of Project Glasswing, OpenAI is conspicuously absent from the partner list. The company whose name is most synonymous with the public face of the AI revolution was not invited to Anthropic's table. But the ChatGPT-maker has moved quickly. Just a week after Glasswing was announced, the company expanded its own Trusted Access for Cyber (TAC) programme and released GPT-5.4-Cyber, a version of its latest model purpose-built for defensive security work with fewer restrictions for verified users.

The launch directly responds to Anthropic's Project Glasswing, with OpenAI's benchmark data showing just how fast these capabilities are advancing: its models went from scoring 27% on capture-the-flag security challenges in August 2025 to 76% just three months later.

But the more structurally interesting question about OpenAI is not its cybersecurity product roadmap. It is the nature of the company's infrastructure bets and what they mean for its ability to compete in a field increasingly defined by the integration of AI, cloud, and security.

Its Stargate infrastructure project gives it unparalleled scale for model development, and its partnership with Microsoft provides some enterprise security reach. But it lacks a platform like Wiz that sits inside enterprise cloud environments, watching for threats in real time. In cybersecurity, that kind of embedded presence is enormously difficult to replicate through model releases alone.

Anthropic has made the first move and formed a solid alliance with the most important names in the world of tech. That leaves OpenAI with fewer options. It could possibly attempt an acquisition of its own in the security space or deepen its relationship with Microsoft to the point where its models become the intelligence layer beneath Microsoft's security stack.

But OpenAI has said it does not think it is "practical or appropriate to centrally decide who gets to defend themselves," positioning its approach as broader and more democratised than Glasswing's curated coalition.

The new-age cybersecurity firms

So, with Anthropic's Project Glasswing a system is emerging where the same firms that develop the AI models capable of finding vulnerabilities at unprecedented scale will also be the firms selling the platforms that protect against those vulnerabilities.

They convene the coalitions that decide who gets access to the most advanced tools. They fund the foundations that maintain the open-source software those tools scan. And they do all of this while their models grow more capable by the month.

While their goal is rational and, in isolation, defensible, the aggregate effect will lead to a concentration of cybersecurity power in a handful of firms that is difficult to overstate.

This could possibly lead to a cartel-like behaviour sans price fixing as these firms will become companies whose structural position means that the rest of the world's ability to secure its digital infrastructure increasingly runs through their products, their platforms, and their decisions about who gets access to what.

THE DAILY QUIZ

Here is a quiz on the United Nations and global governance

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

Vasudevan Mukunth

QUESTION 1

Name the U.S. president who coined the phrase 'United Nations' in a 1942 Allied declaration. He, however, died in April 1945, months before the organisation was formally established, and thus never saw the institution he named come into being.

QUESTION 2

Which are the two languages, from among the UN's six official languages, that are not the national language of any permanent Security Council member? These members' languages account for the remaining four.

QUESTION 3

The X (an event) in 1956 triggered the first 'Emergency Special Session' of the UN General Assembly. This is a procedure reserved for when the Security Council enters a deadlock, in this case caused by two permanent members vetoing resolutions against their own military action. What was X?

QUESTION 4

Name the principal judicial organ of the UN. It rules on disputes between states rather than prosecuting individuals, which is a distinction that sets it apart from the International Criminal Court, an entirely separate institution with which it is frequently confused.

QUESTION 5

Which country cast the Security Council's first-ever veto, in 1946, on a question about the withdrawal of foreign troops from the Levant? Since then, it has also exercised the veto more times than any other permanent member.

Visual Question:

Name the body formerly hosted at these two buildings, which was intimately related to the birth of the United Nations. NICK-D, MOURAD BEN ABDALLAH (CC BY-SA)

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. Westeros was united by a foreign conqueror. Name the conqueror, and the throne he built off the swords of his fallen enemies. **Ans: Aegon Targaryen: Iron Throne**

2. What is House Stark's motto or 'words' as they are called in the show? **Ans: "Winter is Coming"**

3. Cersei Lannister revives an armed spiritual organisation. Name the organisation, and the name of its head. **Ans: The Faith Militant: The High Sparrow**

4. Daenerys Stormborn is one of the main rivals to the Westeros throne. Name the two main groups her army consists of (before coming to Westeros). Also, what are the names of her three dragons? **Ans: The Unsullied and the Dothraki; Drogon, Rhaegal, and Viserion**

5. Gendry is sold to a witch by an armed outlaw group, while Arya later joins a group of assassins. **Ans: The Brotherhood without Banners and the Faceless men**

Visual: Name the actor and his character, and complete his famous phrase. **Ans: Peter Dinklage, Tyrion Lannister; "I drink and I know things."**

Early Birds: Tamal Biswas | PulkitSathe | Sunil Madhavan | Arun Kumar Singh | Sudhir Thapa

KNOW YOUR ENGLISH

He was warned for running his mouth off

The coach maintains a tight ship, expecting full commitment

S. Upendran

"Looks like it was an exciting match. Disappointed that you lost?"

"Not really! Before the match, everyone was saying we had no chance of winning – that the game was going to be one sided. But we certainly gave the opposition a run for their money."

"Did you bet on the game?"

"I'm not that crazy! When you say that you gave someone a run for their money, you're suggesting you gave the opponent a tough time."

"Even though you lost, you competed really well. It was a close contest."

" Although they were the fancied team, we showed them we were nearly as good as them. Here's an example. In the coming elections, I think our party will give the opposition a run for its money."

"Anand thought he'd win the 100 metres race hands down. But surprisingly, Ravi gave him a run for his money."

"The toothpaste manufactured locally is giving some well-known brands a run for their money. Sujatha tells me you have a new boss. What's she like?"

"Very strict. Nothing like the previous one. He was easy going."

"About time your company hired someone who ran a tight ship."

"A tight ship? What are you talking about?"

"When you say that someone 'runs a tight ship', what you mean is that the person is rather strict."

"In other words, the person is well organised. Something that my previous boss wasn't."

"Exactly! A person who runs a tight ship is aware of what is happening in the different departments. Make sure that everyone works. Here's an example. The team's new coach has the reputation of running a tight ship. He has no patience for late comers."

"But tell me, what do you mean by a 'tight ship'?"

"It refers to the ropes that you find on ships. A 'tight ship' is one where the ropes are tightly knotted – so that everything is secure. It is also possible to say 'taut' ship."

"I see. Do 'taut' and 'tight' mean the same thing?"

"In this context, they do. How is Vikram doing? Is he still running his mouth off?"

"Running his mouth off? What are you talking about?"

"The expression 'run your mouth off' is mostly used in American English to mean to talk excessively. It's also possible to say, 'run off at the mouth'."

"Can I say, all of us run our mouths off every now and then?"

"You certainly can. The expression also suggests that the individual is talking about things that he shouldn't be. And when he speaks, he sounds rather rude."

"Sarala isn't very popular with her colleagues. She tends to run her mouth off."

"Somebody should tell her that she should think twice before running off at the mouth."

"Quite a few have already told her, but she still continues to run her mouth off."

"She probably has foot-in-mouth disease."

upendrankye@gmail.com

Word of the day

Grandiloquent:
using long or complicated words in order to impress people

Synonyms: pretentious, flowery, pompous

Usage: *His grandiloquent style made the article hard to read.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/grandiloquent

International Phonetic Alphabet: /grændɪləkwənt/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

INBRIEF

Four killed, over 20 injured in serial accidents in Karnataka

Four people, including three of a family, were killed and more than 20 injured in a series of accidents involving multiple vehicles on National Highway no. 50 in Vijayanagara district of Karnataka on Sunday morning. The accidents occurred near Danapur, close to the BMM ISPAT plant, around 8.30 a.m., when a garlic-laden lorry travelling towards Bengaluru reportedly went out of control and rammed several vehicles moving along the busy stretch of the highway.

Modi speaks to Pawan Kalyan, enquires about his well-being

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has enquired about the health of Deputy Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Pawan Kalyan, after he underwent surgery on Saturday. In a post on X, Mr. Modi said, "Spoke to Shri Pawan Kalyan Garu and enquired about his well-being. He is remarkably courageous and I am sure he will recover very soon." In response, Mr. Pawan Kalyan said he was grateful to Mr. Modi for his kind words and for speaking with him.

Thieves get away with gold from passengers on train

Thieves escaped with 10 sovereigns of gold and other valuables of passengers travelling on a Bengaluru-Narsapur special train in Bapatla district of Andhra Pradesh in the early hours of Sunday. Nearly 10 thieves stole the valuables while the passengers were asleep in the coaches S-11, S-12, and S-13 around 2 a.m. They stopped the train near Appikatla village and escaped. The railway police and the Railway Protection Force alerted the Bapatla law and order police.

Revanth meets Governor over clearance of MLC nominations

Names of M. Kodandaram and Mohammad Azharuddin, approved by the Cabinet, have been pending with Lok Bhavan; the latter has served as a non-legislator Minister for nearly six months

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

In a renewed push to break the prolonged deadlock over Telangana Legislative Council nominations, Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy met Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla at Lok Bhavan on Sunday, urging expeditious approval of pending nominations under the Governor's quota.

The names of M. Kodandaram and Mohammad Azharuddin, which had been approved earlier by the State Cabinet, remain pending with the Lok Bhavan following the transfer of former Governor Jishnu Dev Varma to Maharashtra.

The Chief Minister accompanied by Industries Minister D. Sridhar Babu and Rajya Sabha member Vem Narender Reddy called on Mr. Shukla and sought early clearance of the nominations.

Telangana CM Revanth Reddy along with Minister D. Sridhar Babu at a meeting with Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The urgency comes in the wake of Minorities Welfare Minister Mohammad Azharuddin completing his six-month period as Minister without being a member of the Legislative Assembly or the Council, which is the Constitutional mandatory provision.

He will be completing six months at the end of April, and if he is not nominated as MLC he would have to resign. With the deadline approaching, the government is keen on ensuring that the nomination process is completed without further delay.

Sources indicate that the Chief Minister, during his meeting with the Governor, emphasised the contribution of Professor Kodandaram to the Statehood movement and the constitutional necessity in Mr. Azharuddin's case.

The issue of MLC nominations under the Governor's quota has had a contentious history. In the previous Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) government, then-Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan had rejected the names of Dasoju Sravan and Kurra Satyanarayana, as recommended by the government, triggering a political and legal stand-off.

Six drown in the Cauvery in Mysuru; two found dead in tank near Chikkamagaluru

The Hindu Bureau
MYSURU

Eight persons drowned in two separate incidents in Mysuru and Chikkamagaluru districts of Karnataka.

Six persons drowned in the Cauvery river near the Arakeshwara temple in K.R. Nagar taluk on Sunday. According to the police, the six persons were part of a group of eight persons from different places in Mysuru and Bengaluru, who were visiting a nearby dargah for a gathering. While two persons were rescued by the local people and rushed to a nearby hospital, six others, including a couple, two men and two girls drowned in the river.

The K.R. Nagar Police rushed to the spot while personnel from Fire and Emergency Services fished out the bodies.

In another incident, two persons who went missing on Saturday, were found dead in a tank on Biligiri Estate near Aldur in Chikkamagaluru taluk on Sunday.

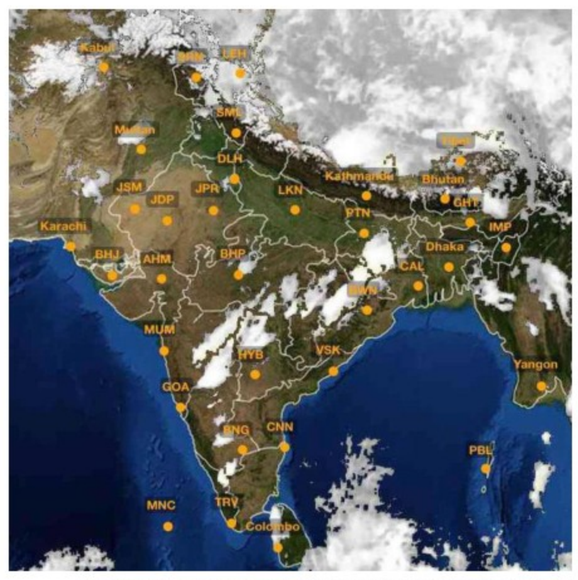
The deceased have been identified as Ramesh of Ganapathi Katte village in Koppa taluk, and Mahesh of Kadavathi village in Koppa taluk. Both had been working at the Biligiri estate for past few months.

They had been there to catch fish in the tank on Saturday evening. As they did not return, neighbours went in search of them and found their footwear near the tank. Later, they informed the police.

The bodies were retrieved from the waterbody on Sunday.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.00 HRS)

Forecast for Monday: Heavy to Very Heavy Rainfall very likely at isolated places over Arunachal Pradesh. Heat Wave conditions very likely at isolated places over Chhattisgarh, and Uttar Pradesh. Heavy Rainfall very likely at isolated places over Assam and Meghalaya

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	35.5	26.4	Kozhikode	—	36.8	28.6
Ahmedabad	—	40.0	26.9	Kurnool	—	43.4	29.7
Aizawl	07.0	31.8	19.6	Lucknow	—	41.9	24.4
Allahabad	—	44.6	25.0	Madurai	—	40.0	25.5
Bengaluru	—	36.2	24.5	Mangaluru	—	33.7	25.9
Bhopal	—	41.8	23.6	Mumbai	—	33.9	24.5
Bhubaneswar	—	00.0	00.0	Mysuru	—	37.0	23.0
Chandigarh	—	39.3	20.8	New Delhi	—	40.0	22.7
Chennai	—	34.9	26.6	Patna	—	39.3	25.6
Coimbatore	—	39.2	25.8	Port Blair	—	33.0	25.7
Dehradun	—	36.7	20.9	Puducherry	—	34.7	24.2
Gangtok	—	19.5	15.1	Pune	—	40.7	22.4
Goa	—	34.2	26.8	Raipur	—	44.0	29.9
Guwahati	24.0	28.4	20.6	Ranchi	—	39.3	23.0
Hubballi	—	38.0	22.0	Shillong	—	21.7	14.0
Hyderabad	—	40.0	24.8	Shimla	—	30.2	17.5
Imphal	—	27.2	18.8	Srinagar	—	21.0	10.5
Jaipur	—	—	—	Thiruvananthapuram	—	35.6	26.7
Kochi	—	32.8	28.8	Tiruchi	—	39.5	26.0
Kohima	—	—	—	Vijayawada	—	—	—
Kolkata	—	37.0	26.5	Visakhapatnam	—	33.0	27.8

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	.65	..40	17	 77	...147	
Bengaluru	.11	..59	22	 70	...104	
Chennai	...5	4	36	 66	49	
Delhi	.22	108	57	... 311	...377	
Hyderabad	...2	7	31	 72	94	
Kolkata	.18	..28	13	 42	61	
Lucknow	...7	..50	75	... 228	...144	
Mumbai	...3	..23	51	 83	...167	
Pune	...--	..38	95	 73	...115	
Visakhapatnam	.45	..50	24	 25	92	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Ghaziabad and Greater Noida, both in Uttar Pradesh recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 336 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Bhiwani, Haryana recorded a healthy AQI score of 29.

Air Quality Code: Poor | Moderate | Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Safe harbour

In view of the two-month fishing ban, fishermen on Sunday anchored their motorboats amid the mangrove forests in the Buckingham Canal near Gundamala village in Prakasam district of Andhra Pradesh. KOMMURI SRINIVAS

Southern States' combined representation will increase in LS after delimitation: Anurag Thakur

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

BJP leader and former Minister Anurag Thakur on Sunday sought to dismantle the Opposition's charges that delimitation would punish and hurt southern States as a "false narrative" and "manufactured crisis" by the DMK and Congress.

Addressing a press conference in Bengaluru, he explained that under the Narendra Modi Government's proposed "50% formula", every single southern State would gain more seats than even a 2011 Census projection would have provided. "For example, Tamil Nadu's current 39 Lok Sabha seats would leap to 59 (ten more than the 2011 Census projection), Kerala's tally would increase from 20 to 30 bonus seats, and Karnataka would move from 28 to 42 seats. Andhra Pradesh would increase from 25 to 37 seats, and Telangana from 17 to 25 seats," he said.

MP Anurag Thakur during a press conference at the BJP party office in Bengaluru on Sunday. ALLEN EGENUSE J.

He said that the southern States' combined representation would not decrease; rather, their total share in the Lok Sabha would slightly increase from 23.76% (129 of 543 seats now) to 23.90% (195 of 816 seats proposed).

Mr. Thakur condemned the Congress, TMC, DMK, and the Samajwadi Party for blocking the passage of the Constitution Amendment Bill for the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam on April 17, 2026.

He noted that this marks the fifth time the INDIA bloc has stalled women's reservation, and the first time the Congress has outright voted against a women's reservation proposal. He warned the Opposition that the mothers and sisters of the country will never forget this "betrayal" and are ready to give a fitting reply to those who blocked their constitutional rights.

Earlier, the BJP leaders held a symbolic protest against defeat of the Bill.

AICC diktat against 'talks on CM candidate' brings in uneasy calm in Kerala unit

G. Anand
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The truce ushered in by the All India Congress Committee (AICC) to tamp down "fractious discussions" about the prospective Congress Legislature Party (CLP) leader and possible Chief Minister candidate if the United Democratic Front (UDF) triumphs in the Assembly election appeared to be holding tenuously in the party in Kerala, for now.

V.D. Satheesan (second from left) seated next to senior Congress leader Ramesh Chennithala and AICC general secretary K.C. Venugopal — top contenders for the party's CM post. A. JAYAMOHAN

The Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) leadership has attempted, on and off, and with mixed results, to rein in the rank and file from juggling the names of the Congress's Chief Minister probables on social media. For one, former KPCC president K. Muraleedharan on Sunday noted that various supposedly pro-Congress social media handles had mooted, lately, the possibility of top leaders holding the CLP leader's post, and, by extension, the office of the Chief Minister, if the UDF assumed power, on a "term basis."

Mr. Muraleedharan sought to quash what he termed potentially schismatic speculation. He told reporters that Congress elects its legislature party leader for a "fixed term". Mr. Muraleedharan noted that the next CLP leaders' possible swearing-in as the UDF's next Chief Minister is ineluctably "conditional on" the poll outcome.

"If it comes to such a juncture, Congress MLAs and MPs will have a say in the matter, and they can express it in the right party forum.

There is no urgency to jump the gun on the leadership question in the CLP," he said.

Mr. Muraleedharan's statement assumed significance against the backdrop of former KPCC president and veteran of Kannur politics K. Sudhakaran, MP, stating on Saturday that he had broached the name of AICC general secretary K.C. Venugopal for the Chief Minister's post when he "ran into AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge" in Parliament.

Two other possible top contenders for the Chief Ministership kept an unusually low profile on Sunday. Leader of the Opposition V.D. Satheesan pointedly ignored questions about the leadership debate.

Senior Congress leader Ramesh Chennithala's office sought to dispel speculation that he was in Delhi to discuss the issue with the AICC's top leadership.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL-2, BENGALURU
BSNL Builiding 4th Floor, Telephone House Rajbhavan Road Bengaluru - 560001

RC No. 1372/2019 Form No. 14 (See Regulation 33(2))

The Karnataka Bank Limited, Wilson Garden Branch ,Wilson Garden, Bengaluru - 560 027. **... Certificate Holder Bank**
Versus
M/S. GOODWILL MARKETING INC & OTHERS
....Certified Debtors/Defendants

DEMAND NOTICE

To
1. M/s. Goodwill Marketing INC, No. 1/1, Park Area, 9th Cross, Wilson Garden, Bengaluru
2. Mr. K. Prakash S/o. Krishnappa, Managing Partner, M/s. Goodwill Marketing INC, No. 12, Mill Road, Akkipet Cross, Bengaluru.
3. Mrs. Susheela S, W/o. K. Prakash, Partner M/s. Goodwill Marketing INC, No. 1/1, Park Area, 9th Cross, Wilson Garden, Bengaluru
....Certified Debtors/Defendants

In view of the Recovery Certificate issued in **T.A. No.1496/2017** passed by the Hon'ble Presiding Officer, DRT, Bengaluru on dtd 05.08.2017 an amount of **Rs.16,41,248/-** (Rupees Sixteen Lakhs Forty one Thousand Two Hundred and Forty Eight Only) is due against you along with interest and costs from date of filing of O.A.s till realization of the Recovery Certificate .
In addition to the sum aforesaid you will be liable to pay all charges and expenses incurred in respect of the service of this notice and other process that may be taken for recovering the amount due.
You are hereby called upon to deposit the amount within 15 days of the receipt of the notice, failing which the recovery shall be made as per rules.
Given under my hand and seal of the Tribunal on **06.07.2020.**

Sd/- Recovery Officer-2
Debts Recovery Tribunal-2, Bengaluru

Note: Attention is invited to Rule 16 of the Second Schedule of the Income Tax Act 1961 read with Recovery of Debts Due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 which is reproduced below:
"Rule 16 (1) Where a notice has been served on a defaulter under Rule 2, the defaulter or his representative in interest shall not be competent to mortgage, charge, lease or otherwise deal with any property belonging to him except with the permission of the Debt Recovery Officer, nor shall any Civil Court issue any process against such property in execution of a decree for the payment of money. (2) Where an attachment has been made under this Schedule any private transfer or delivery of the property attached or of any interest therein and any payment to the defaulter of any debt, dividend or other monies contrary to such attachment, shall be void, as against all claims enforceable under the attachment. 3) You are also liable to disclose your assets both movable and immovable to this Tribunal along with the Income Tax Returns of last 5 years.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL-1, BENGALURU
BSNL Builiding 4th Floor, Telephone House Rajbhavan Road Bengaluru - 560001

DRC No. 12028/2017 Form No. 14 (See Regulation 33(2))

The Karnataka Bank Limited, Branch at : D. No. 2257, 'D' Block, Kodigehalli Main Road, Opp. Sterling Apartments, Sahakaranagar, Bengaluru - 560 092. **... Certificate Holder**
Versus
Sri C. A. Ramachandra Murthy & Another ....Defendants/Certified Debtors

DEMAND NOTICE

To
Sri C. A. Ramachandra Murthy S/o. C. R. Anantha Murthy, No. C-43, SPT AIR Quarters, Yelahanka New Town, Bengaluru.
Also at : Sri C. A. Ramachandra Murthy S/o. C. R. Anantha Murthy, No. 17, 5th Main, 5th Cross, CPV Block, Ganganagar Extension, Bengaluru - 560 032.
Also at : Sri C. A. Ramachandra Murthy S/o. C. R. Anantha Murthy, Dooradarshana Kendra, J .C. Nagara, Bengaluru. **....Defendants**
In view of the Recovery Certificate issued in **O.A. No.564/2010** passed by the Hon'ble Presiding Officer, DRT, Bengaluru an amount of **Rs.10,52,080.00** (Rupees Ten Lakhs Fifty Two Thousand Eighty Only) is due against you along with interest and costs from date of filing of O.A.s till realization.
You are hereby called upon to deposit the above sum within 15 days of the receipt of the notice, failing which the recovery shall be made as per rules.
In addition to the sum aforesaid you will be liable to pay :
a)Such interest as is payable for the period commencing immediately after this notice of the execution proceedings.
b)All costs, charges and expenses incurred in respect of the service of this notice and other process that may be taken for recovering the amount due.
Given under my hand and seal of the Tribunal on **12.07.2018**

Sd/- Recovery Officer-2
Debts Recovery Tribunal-1, Bengaluru

Note: Attention is invited to Rule 16 of the Second Schedule of the Income Tax Act 1961 read with Recovery of Debts Due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 which is reproduced below:
"Rule 16 (1) Where a notice has been served on a defaulter under Rule 2, the defaulter or his representative in interest shall not be competent to mortgage, charge, lease or otherwise deal with any property belonging to him except with the permission of the Debt Recovery Officer, nor shall any Civil Court issue any process against such property in execution of a decree for the payment of money. (2) Where an attachment has been made under this Schedule any private transfer or delivery of the property attached or of any interest therein and any payment to the defaulter of any debt, dividend or other monies contrary to such attachment, shall be void, as against all claims enforceable under the attachment.

Deceptively benign

India must move from fossil fuel to avoid amplifying imported inflation

While India's March retail inflation, at 3.4%, rose marginally from February's 3.2%, this increase is deceptively benign. This is evident from the upward pressure on the Wholesale Price Index (WPI), which climbed to a 38-month high of 3.88% in March. It is important to note that while the Consumer Price Index (CPI) has transitioned to a new base year of 2024, the WPI continues to use the 2011-12 base year, a divergence that must be kept in mind when interpreting the latest inflation data. While the March CPI appears comfortably within the RBI's 4%-6% tolerance band, the reading masks a far more complex build-up of pressures driven primarily by rising input costs, especially fuel prices. WPI inflation rose from about 2.4% in February to 3.88% in March, indicating a sharp month-on-month acceleration in wholesale price pressures. This has found only muted reflection in food prices, with the Consumer Food Price Index (CFPI) rising moderately from roughly 3.4% in February to about 3.8% in March.

Several factors are driving this divergence, chief among them the rupee's precipitous depreciation of about 2.5%-3% against the U.S. dollar. Given that crude oil and gas are globally traded in dollars, this has amplified imported inflation. The U.S.-Israeli war on Iran has disrupted supply chains for these critical fuels, pushing up global prices and transmitting inflationary pressures across economies. The rupee's depreciation has also raised the cost of imports, including fertilizers, plastics, and petrochemical products, which are key to pharmaceuticals, textiles and automobiles. While many firms have absorbed these costs, this may not be sustainable. At the same time, the contraction in exports (down about 3%-4% year-on-year) and imports (down about 5%-6% YoY) in March is not indicative of weakening demand alone, but of war-induced supply disruptions. In response, exporters – particularly MSMEs – are redirecting output to the domestic market, aided by policy relaxations that allow greater domestic sales from export-oriented units. This is creating localised supply gluts, delaying price pass-through even as producer margins compress due to rising input costs. The result is a temporary suppression of CPI. As these pressures unwind, inflation is likely to rise even as growth slows – pointing not to stability but to emerging stagflationary risks. The IMF's latest World Economic Outlook flags rising global recession risks and trims India's FY27 growth forecast to around 6.2%. The RBI, too, has echoed these concerns. This complex challenge underscores the vulnerability of oil-import-dependent economies. It also presents an opportunity for India to accelerate its shift to renewable energy.

Costs and wages

Governments must not view labour unrest as a law-and-order problem

The ongoing factory workers' protests in Noida's industrial belt are one of the largest industrial labour mobilisations in recent times. Violence has been documented as well: stone-pelting and attempts to breach police barricades, as well as a brutal police lathicharge. After Haryana hiked wages for workers by 35% following protests in Faridabad, Gurugram, and Manesar, workers in Noida realised that their own wages were lower, a situation exacerbated by the pinch in LPG supplies. Trade unions have demanded ₹18,000 to ₹25,000 a month – which the Uttar Pradesh government's interim hike of around 21% did not meet – and fixed working hours and holidays and overtime pay. The new Labour Codes that the Union government enforced from late 2025 allow a 12-hour single workday and specify wage floors but not actual wages, leaving them to the States. As a result, the Codes have allowed employers in certain States to extract more work from the longer workday at or near the statutory minimum pay. The share of contract labour in the formal manufacturing sector in India is the highest since 1997-98. Ironically, the provisions of the Labour Codes encourage the sector to persist with contract labour rather than appreciate job security, while also imposing limits on worker strikes. These, together with the energy crisis and increasing food prices, precipitated the protests.

In 2024, the Samsung workers' strike in Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu, was similarly over low wages, unpaid overtime, and the company's refusal to recognise unions. More recently, workers at the IOCL Panipat refinery went on strike demanding an eight-hour workday, better wages, and safer working conditions, as did workers at the NTPC plant in Patratu, and Adani's Raikheda plant in Raipur. This is practically a wave in the Labour Codes regime, showing that labour rights are paper tigers – exacerbated by Yogi Adityanath's claim that the protests were a conspiracy, followed by the interim hike. A worker who spends one-sixth of his monthly income on cooking costs alone does not need to be radicalised to understand that his wage is insufficient. Further, neither the State nor the Centre responded substantively to residential societies barring domestic workers who had joined the protests by displaying their photographs at the gates – a serious civil rights infraction. The Indian Labour Conference has not convened since 2015, and the Codes were passed without the tripartite consultation that it would have facilitated. The solution to the agitation, in sum, is simple: institute humane working hours and wages, and institute genuine labour reform that is well enforced. The problem only looks complicated because the government is dragging its feet.

Delimitation — a case of to be or not to be

K.F. Wilfred

Former Senior Principal Secretary of the Election Commission of India

A special session of Parliament to consider the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill, 2026 – and also the Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026, and the Delimitation Bill, 2026 – for readjustment of Lok Sabha and Legislative Assembly seats across the country and implementation of reservation of seats for women in Lok Sabha and Legislative Assemblies (linking it to proposed fresh delimitation for which there was a separate Delimitation Bill) ended in a spectacular way. The proposed delimitation was to reallocate the number of Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assembly seats among States (and Union Territories with legislatures), and determine the territorial boundaries of each constituency, based on data from the 2011 Census. The total number of Lok Sabha seats was proposed to be increased to 850. The special session was convened at a time when electioneering for the ongoing Legislative Assembly elections is at its peak in West Bengal and Tamil Nadu, which did not go down well at all with several Opposition parties.

Law and practice

Articles 82 and 170 (3) of the Constitution require a readjustment of the number of Lok Sabha and Assembly seats in each State and the extent/boundary of every constituency, after each Census. The first delimitation exercise in independent India was carried out in 1950-51 by the Election Commission of India, in consultation with Parliamentary Advisory Committees established for various States. As the delimitation exercise could not await the completion of the 1951 Census, given the urgency of conducting elections at the earliest, the first delimitation was based on estimated population figures, as of March 1, 1950, as provided by the Census Commissioner.

After the completion of the first general election, a fresh delimitation did take place based on the 1951 Census as per the mandate of Articles 82 and 170. Subsequently, readjustment of constituencies, both in terms of number and boundary, was carried out after the Census in 1961 and 1971. The delimitation based on the 1971 Census was completed in 1976. Subsequently, the Forty-Second Amendment of the Constitution of India froze further delimitation until the Census of 2001. The temporary freeze on delimitation was introduced in the context of population control measures actively promoted by the Indira Gandhi government. It was intended to ensure that States successfully curbing population growth were not disadvantaged in terms of representation in Parliament and State Legislative Assemblies due to lower population figures, while States with higher population growth did not gain a corresponding increase in seats.

The delimitation debate raises questions on representation and equity

The issue of population growth

The temporary freeze on delimitation ended in 2001. However, the government led by Atal Bihari Vajpayee at the time decided that it was necessary to continue the freeze on the number of seats in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies. The government decided to redraw the territories of constituencies to ensure *inter se* parity in terms of population across them, as this balance had been disrupted/disturbed due to large-scale internal migration of people in search of employment and livelihood since 1971. To this end, the Constitutional provisions were amended in order to provide that territories of the constituencies would be readjusted on the basis of the 2001 Census figures without altering the number of Lok Sabha or Assembly seats.

The Statement of Objects and Reasons in the Bill for the Constitution (Eighty-fourth Amendment) Act, 2001, *inter alia*, stated that, in view of the progress of family planning programmes across different parts of the country, the government – under the National Population Policy strategy – decided to extend the freeze on undertaking fresh delimitation up to the year 2026. This was intended as a motivational measure to enable State governments to continue pursuing the goal of population stabilisation.

Therefore, the apparent thinking at that point of time was that population growth would stabilise across all States within the next 25 years. As per the provisions of Articles 82 and 170(3), as amended in 2001 by the Eighty-Fourth Amendment Act, the freeze on further delimitation is to be in place until the population figures of the first Census to be taken after 2026 are published. In fact, a new national Census (against the delayed 2021 Census) is under way.

The Statement of Objects and Reasons of the current Delimitation Bill, 2026, *inter alia*, noted that the growth of population across different constituencies along with migration from one place to another – especially rural to urban migration – "have resulted in varying density of population in electoral constituencies"; the Bill sought to address this issue. Ironically, for bringing about parity in population among constituencies, both intra- State and inter-States, the population figures of the 2011 Census were to be adopted – this means that the base data to be used for course correction or updating would have been 15-year-old population figures.

Looking ahead

There is nothing to suggest that migration has either stopped or slowed since 2011, or that population growth has stabilised uniformly across all regions. Against this backdrop, there is no assurance/guarantee that constituencies based on the 2011 Census would stand the test of parity or uniformity in terms of population – and, by extension, in the electorate – at the point when the delimitation exercise would have been completed.

It was quite likely that when constituencies are finally carved out a couple of years down the line, many of them would exhibit clear and evident real-time disparities when compared with the principles set out in the Statement of Objects and Reasons of the present Bill.

Article 81(2) of the Constitution provides that each State shall be allotted Lok Sabha seats in such a manner that the ratio of seats to population, as far as practicable, remains the same across all States.

There is no dispute that the letter of this Article only refers to population as a criterion. However, if we take a broader view, there would be inherent provisions in the Constitution to support the States to retain their scale of parliamentary representation. There may also be scope to incorporate additional parameters/markers alongside population, especially since the number of seats is expected to increase significantly this time, unlike the relatively modest/nominal increases in earlier exercises. After all, States are the component units forming the Union. Strong components will only strengthen the Union.

The views expressed are personal

Lessons from Hungary's vote and Orbán's defeat

Kavita Krishnan

Feminist activist and writer whose forthcoming book is 'The Global De-Democratisation Project: Script, Actors, Enablers'

Hungarian voters have swept their far-right strongman Viktor Orbán out of office, ending his 16-year run as Prime Minister and electoral autocrat. Here are six lessons the world can take from them.

First, an illiberal democracy can be ousted in elections. Mr. Orbán prepared the model for what he called 'illiberal democracy' (or electoral autocracy), emulated by many others including Donald Trump and Narendra Modi. Such regimes create an impression of the Great Leader's unstoppable popularity and electoral invincibility – or what we may call the *'aayega* to Orbán hi' effect. This produces apathy: voting is either a display of fealty, or an exercise in futility.

Hungarians have shattered that illusion, and India must take note.

Democratic resilience affirmed

Second, obituaries to modern universal democracy are premature. Realist experts, as well as illiberal leaders and ideologues, tell us that democracy has no universal validity, it is elitist and unpopular with the majority, even in the West, as proved by popular mandates for Brexit, Mr. Trump, Mr. Orbán,and Mr. Modi, and the stability of the Chinese and Russian regimes.

Péter Magyar, who defeated Mr. Orban, is probably as bad on LGBTQIA+ rights as Mr. Orbán and worse on immigration. But the election is not about him. It is about Hungarians affirming, for all of us, that a majority can vote against majoritarianism; that regime change against tyrants is an irrepressible human urge.

Third, a mandate for Ukraine. What is self-evident in Europe might be less so in India; Ukraine won the Hungarian election.

On winning the 2022 elections, Mr. Orbán claimed to have 'overpowered' not only his immediate rivals but also Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. Going by his party's 2026 campaign billboards, a visitor could be forgiven for assuming that Mr. Orbán's rival was Mr. Zelenskyy, not Mr. Magyar. Mr. Orbán asked Hungarian voters, 'Who should form government: Zelenskyy or me?'

Hungarians have defeated a national autocrat and challenged a broader illiberal international alliance

He blamed Hungary's economic crisis on European Union (EU) aid to Ukraine – a pretext for a 'peace plan' that was a wishlist by Russian President Vladimir Putin. It is telling that Hungarian voters rebuffed this notion, despite it being legitimised by some geopolitical and economic pundits.

Instead, Hungarians blamed the wrecked economy on Mr. Orbán's corrupt cronyism that was inseparable from his position as Mr. Putin's Praetor in Europe. He used Russian oil profits to bankroll 'Europe's richest far-right think tank', which funnelled funds to parties such as Reform UK.

United States Vice-President J.D. Vance boasts that cutting off aid to Ukraine is 'one of the proudest' achievements of the Trump administration. To him, as to much of Europe's far-right, a Russian victory over Ukraine would be a victory for what Mr. Vance, in his electoral endorsement of Mr. Orbán, called the 'defence of Western/Christian civilisation and values'.

Like Mr. Trump and Mr. Putin, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu too endorsed Mr. Orbán because he supports the project of folding Europe into a Russia-led Christian white-supremacist Eurasia, away from the 'evil, globalist' European Union.

Some of the accusations made

Fourth, regime change accusations are confessions. Mr. Vance accused the EU of "one of the worst examples of foreign election interference". Mr. Orbán accused Ukraine of funding the opposition party Tisza, just as he has blamed Pride march protests on 'regime change' and 'colonial' interference by the EU. As is so often the case, the shrillest accusations are often confessions. Not only were Mr. Netanyahu, Mr. Trump and Mr. Vance star campaigners for Mr. Orbán, but he also invited Russian intelligence operatives and experts in online disinformation to run large-scale fake news campaigns. The Russian embassy itself stands accused of running a pro-Orbán influence operation.

Fifth, Mr. Orbán lost power, Chinese President Xi Jinping lost a friend. Mr. Xi personally called Mr. Orbán a friend. In 2024, when he visited Hungary, the police cracked down on Tibetans to prevent any protests. This friendship was not just pragmatic, it was ideological. The founder of a leading media platform in China, Eric Xun Li, writes in an international left-wing journal that while Mr. Trump's MAGA movement sees China as a rival, it shares China's view of Ukraine, Europe, and universalist democracy, as do Mr. Putin and Mr. Orbán. He enthuses, "Hungary stands out as the most pro-China government in Europe", and is also "the country most closely aligned with Russia".

Mr. Xi has extolled the 'win-win cooperation' and 'all-weather' partnership between Hungary and China. But Hungarians noticed that the Belt and Road Initiative projects were 'win-win' for Mr. Orbán's childhood friend and Hungary's richest businessman, Lőrinc Mészáros, and 'lose-lose' for Hungary's economy.

Despite fierce protests by Hungarian students, the Orbán regime went ahead with a project backed personally by Mr. Xi: a campus of Shanghai's Fudan University in Hungary. Pre-tax construction costs for this campus were "estimated at $1.8 billion, more than the Hungarian government spent on its entire higher-education system in 2019".

Sustain the momentum

Sixth, it is time to discard the 'West vs rest' world map. We are accustomed and thus attached to a West versus rest map of the world. But there is no room on that map for Hungary, which was the battleground to decide if Europe should be a de-democratised outpost for Mr. Trump, Mr. Netanyahu, Mr. Putin and Mr. Xi. Mr. Orbán was the sole European leader with the distinction of flouting International Criminal Court arrest warrants for both Mr. Netanyahu and Mr. Putin on genocide charges.

Hungarians defeated not just a national tyrant but also an illiberal international alliance. One hopes that pro-democracy people of the world will unite to do the same.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Rejection of Bill

The address by the Prime Minister to the nation (Front page, "NDA will remove hurdles before women's quota: PM", April 19) was uncalled for and does not befit his stature. His rant against the Opposition on national television betrays the government's inability to take defeat in its stride. The government is following a 'my way or the highway' approach by threatening Opposition parties with consequences merely because they rightfully rejected the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill. If the passage of the women's reservation Bill is indeed the leitmotif of the government of the day, it should not shy away from delinking it from the delimitation Bill. The electorate cannot be taken for a ride any longer, and the government should stop crying foul.

Aanya Singhal,
Noida, Uttar Pradesh

The failure of the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill, 2026 reflects the will of the electorate as expressed through their representatives. Unlike in the past, the Opposition's united stand in defeating a rather unjustified Bill offers a lesson to the ruling regime, which has grown accustomed to taking other parties for granted. The Home Minister's accusation that the Opposition is engaging in "ruthless politics" would be better directed at the ruling BJP, which attempted to pass the Bill without proper discussion in the House. The Prime Minister's description of the Bill's defeat as an "attack on women's dignity", along with his assertion that the Opposition will receive a befitting response, sounds more like election rhetoric. It raises the question of why the Women's Reservation Bill is being linked to the Delimitation Bill.

Prabhu Raj R.,
Bengaluru

Honeybee farming

I am with the Laboratory of Palynology and Paleoecology at the French Institute of Pondicherry and read with interest the report, "Keeping honeybees warm in Kashmir winters" (April 19). *Apis cerana*/*Apis cerana indica*, *Apis florea*, *Apis dorsata*, *Apis indica*, *Apis karinjodian*, and *Apis laboriosa* are among the currently accepted species of honeybees native to Asia and are certainly found in South Asia. Of course, the report focuses on *Apis mellifera*, a species introduced across the world by European and settler colonists (from Australia and New Zealand to South, Central, and North America).

The report is of interest from the perspective of an apple farmer in Kashmir who must physically migrate bee boxes to the plains to survive the harsh winter. However, it misses key ecological points and some nuances that are increasingly being recognised regarding the role of non-human actors in our human-centred world, often referred to as the Anthropocene. Diversity matters for all ecosystems, and monofloral honeys undermine this principle. Flowering ceases during frost, and even apple trees do not bloom in winter. A report such as this, with links to the CSIR study or report for further details, would be most helpful.

Anupama Krishnamurthy,
Puducherry

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the postal address.

Differentiating welfare and development

M. Suresh Babu

Director, Madras Institute of Development Studies. The views expressed are personal

In contemporary democratic politics, development has emerged as a central electoral promise, often framed as a politically resonant goal that transcends ideological divides. Political actors deploy the language of development to signal commitments to economic growth, infrastructure expansion, employment generation, and improved public services, thereby appealing to a broad spectrum of voters. In India, development-oriented campaigns have increasingly emphasised visible and tangible outcomes such as infrastructure, roads, housing etc. However, the political assurance of development can obscure distributional concerns, mask inequalities, or reduce complex socio-economic challenges to simplified slogans. Political parties' claims of delivering development are ridden with confusion between welfare and development and the pace with which development manifests.

Complementary but different

The confusion between welfare and development arises from their frequent overlap in political and policy discourse. Welfare typically refers to immediate, redistributive interventions aimed at alleviating poverty, reducing vulnerability, and ensuring basic needs such as food security, income support, and access to essential services. Development, in contrast, denotes a broader, long-term process of structural transformation involving sustained economic growth, productivity enhancement, and expansion of human capabilities. However, in practice, the boundaries between the two often blur. This conflation is evident in the Indian context, where large-scale social protection programmes coexist with ambitions of rapid economic growth. The persistence of confusion lies in the differing time horizons and objectives: welfare is often short-term and consumption-oriented, while development is long-term and production-oriented. A more coherent approach requires recognising welfare and development as complementary rather than interchangeable.

Tensions persist between welfare provisioning and development objectives, particularly in the context of fiscal constraints and concerns about efficiency. Excessive redistribution may distort incentives and crowd out productive investment. The design and quality of welfare programmes are critical determinants of their developmental impact, as poorly designed interventions may lead to leakages, exclusion errors, and limited effectiveness.

Political claims of delivering development often refer to short-term visible outcomes. Development is best understood as an incremental and long-term process rather than a series of discrete, short-term achievements. It involves the gradual transformation of economic structures, institutional capacities, and social outcomes over extended periods, often spanning decades. Unlike episodic policy successes or visible infrastructure projects, development unfolds through cumulative improvements in productivity, human capital, technological adoption, and governance systems. Scholars have emphasised the role of institutions in shaping this evolutionary trajectory, highlighting that sustainable development depends on the slow consolidation of rules, norms, and state capacity. Similarly, the capability approach associated with Amartya Sen underscores that expanding human freedoms – through education, health, and social inclusion –is a gradual process requiring sustained public investment and policy continuity. This perspective cautions against viewing development through the lens of immediate outcomes or electoral cycles, and instead frames it as a continuous, path-dependent process where incremental gains, if consistently reinforced, lead to substantive and durable transformations. The notion of "quick development" as promised by political parties reflects a persistent fallacy in policy and political discourse, rooted in the expectation that complex transformations can be achieved within short time frames.

Dangers of welfare populism

Public goods such as quality schooling, public health systems, infrastructure, and rule of law are generally more conducive to long-term development than welfare populism. They raise productivity and generate broad, economy-wide benefits over time. Because they are non-excludable and produce strong positive externalities, their impact tends to be durable, cumulative, and inclusive. In contrast, populist 'development welfarism' such as politically motivated transfers which include free electricity, loan waivers, or cash handouts prioritise immediate consumption gains and electoral appeal. While these measures can provide short-term relief, they often do not expand productive capacity. Importantly when overused, they can strain public finances and crowd out investment in public goods. However, well-designed welfare schemes such as nutrition support, employment guarantees, or basic income floors can enhance human capabilities, reduce vulnerability, and even improve productivity. The problem is not welfare per se, but populist and fiscally unsustainable welfare that substitutes for, rather than complements, development.

Conflating populist welfare promises and long-term development goals poses significant risks as it prioritises short-term political gains over long-term economic capacity. The challenge for policymakers lies in designing welfare systems that are fiscally sustainable, institutionally robust, and aligned with long-term objectives. It is time that election manifestos acknowledge this and embark on refinements.

Conflating populist welfare promises and long-term development goals poses significant risks as it prioritises short-term political gains over long-term economic capacity

Power play among the young and old

There have been signs of discord among the BJP's top leadership in Rajasthan

STATE OF PLAY

Mohammed Iqbal
mohammed.iqbal@thehindu.co.in

The recent utterances of the former Chief Minister of Rajasthan, Vasundhara Raje, have brought her to the centre of a political storm, and has hinted at signals of dissent within the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) internal circle in Rajasthan.

Ms. Raje, who does not exercise power at present, had been asking to give responsibilities to loyal party workers. Widely recognised for her grassroots leadership, Ms. Raje had launched a 'Jansamvad Yatra' along with her son, the MP of Jhalawar-Baran, Dushyant Singh, as a public outreach event. Addressing a gathering at Manohar Thana, the former CM thanked the public for their support and affection and highlighted her long association with the region. Calling upon the people to maintain their love and trust, Ms. Raje said that some small issues would always keep coming up, "someone's house is not getting built, someone's pension is not being released, someone has not received [adequate] compensation. Someone else got it, I didn't, that also happens. This is the world, it goes on. But, together, we will try to resolve these issues," she said.

Ms. Raje further added, "...it happens with me too. I could not do anything even for myself. I lost mine. I could not save myself". These remarks went viral on social media platforms and created a political storm, with critics claiming that a disgruntled Ms. Raje was conveying her pain over not getting the Chief Minister's post when the BJP was elected

to power in 2023.

Ms. Raje was considered a frontrunner for the Chief Minister's post (it would have been her third term) after the BJP returned to power in the State. However, the party appointed first-time MLA Bhajan Lal Sharma as the new CM, forcing Ms. Raje to announce his name at a BJP legislature party meeting. She has since been seen as being sidelined in important party matters.

On the face of it, Ms. Raje's remarks seemed to have reflected her dissatisfaction over her "weak position" in the BJP at the age of 73. Her supporters have often pointed out that she only holds the position of the party's national vice-president, while her contemporaries – former Gujarat CM Narendra Modi and former Madhya Pradesh CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan – are relishing power at the Centre.

Opposition jabs

Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav, who was on a brief visit to Jaipur when the controversy emerged, added an element of political intrigue with his statements made to journalists. When asked about the BJP government's performance in the State, Mr. Yadav said, "Let me speak my mind. If Vasundhara Ji were the Chief Minister, better work would have been done [in Rajasthan]." Targeting the BJP's much-publicised "double-engine government" model, Mr. Yadav remarked that instead of working in tandem, the two engines appeared to be "colliding rather than accelerating". He mocked the internal discord in the BJP and said that there was a lack of authority in the ruling set-up because of the manner in which the Chief Minister was appointed.

Not one to miss an opportunity, veteran Congress leader and former CM Ashok Gehlot joined in and agreed with Mr. Yadav's remarks. "There is weight in what Mr. Yadav has stated. Ever since a *parchi* (slip) regime has been formed in Rajasthan, there is no serious governance. The government focuses only on media appearances," Mr. Gehlot said.

As the matter escalated with BJP State president Madan Rathore and other senior leaders offering explanations, Ms. Raje was compelled to set the record straight. She made it clear that her remarks were not about the CM's post, but about "road alignment and house demolition" issues. Ms. Raje said she was trying to tell the people that a highway passed in front of her house in Dholpur, and that she had to move her boundary wall back. "When some people approached me to get a highway alignment changed because it would pass through their land, I told them I could not help them as I could not stop it for my own house," she said.

While the former CM affirmed that her statement was twisted and taken out of context, there is an impression about a rift emerging in the BJP amid attempts to establish a new generation of leadership coming out of Ms. Raje's political shadow. Evidently, the party needs to evolve a balance between the ambitions of young leaders and respect for the elderly and seasoned politicians.

Why Noida's factory unrest is about more than just wages

Even after the post-protest revision of wages, workers argue that the increase is nominal and that they are constrained by high cost-of-living

DATA POINT

Devyanshi Bihani

The streets of Noida's industrial belt saw scenes of unrest on April 13 as protesting factory workers set vehicles ablaze, hurled stones, and clashed with the police. Workers from multiple units gathered in large numbers, accusing employers of low wages, irregular payments, and exploitative practices. The protests point to a structural issue in India's labour market, where industries may be formally registered, but workers within them often lack basic protections such as written contracts and social security.

Data shows that even among regular wage and salaried workers in non-agricultural sectors, informality remains widespread. In 2025, about 58.2% of workers had no written job contract, while 51.7% were not eligible for any social security benefits. In addition, 47.3% were not eligible for paid leave. This means that a significant section of workers employed in formal establishments are, in practice, informally employed.

The extent of this informalisation varies across States **(Chart 1)**. Uttar Pradesh, where the Gautam Buddha Nagar (Noida) protests took place, stands out on multiple indicators. Around 67.8% of regular workers in the State had no written contract, 62.4% were not eligible for paid leave, and 59.2% lacked access to any specified social security benefit. Further, 46.3% of workers in the State were simultaneously without a written contract, paid leave, and social security – among the highest proportions across States. Bihar, Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan also report high levels of deprivation across these indicators.

One factor underlying this trend is the growing reliance on contract labour. Data indicates that the share of contract workers in total industrial employment has risen steadily over the past decade, from about 35% in 2014-15 to 42% in 2023-24 **(Chart 2)**. This suggests a structural shift in employment practices, with firms increasingly relying on intermediaries to hire workers. Workers hired through contractors are less likely to have written agreements, paid leave, or access to social security schemes such as Employees' State Insurance (ESI). This helps explain the contradiction at the centre of the Noida protests: workers employed within formal factories demanding basic protections typically associated with formal employment. The Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU) president, Sudip Dutta, pointed to broader concerns around workplace conditions, including long hours in difficult environments, lack of basic facilities, and how contract workers are vulnerable to arbitrary dismissals. He argued that the increasing reliance on contract labour has weakened the enforcement of labour protections on the ground.

While the increase in minimum wages **(Chart 3)** appears significant, it is because the base wage itself is very low. For instance, in Delhi, monthly wages for unskilled workers rose from ₹9,568 in April 2016 to ₹18,456 in April 2025 which is an increase of about 92.9%. In Haryana, wages were increased only by about 39% between 2016 and 2025. However, following the recent labour unrest reported from Manesar, Faridabad, and Gurugram, the State announced a revision of around 35% over the previous year, taking the overall increase since 2016 to about 88.6%.

In Uttar Pradesh, the minimum wage for unskilled workers rose from ₹7,107 in April 2016 to ₹11,313 in April 2026. The wage revision announced by Haryana on April 9, triggered protests in Noida, prompting the Uttar Pradesh government to announce an interim solution late that night. The State announced an interim increase of up to 21% for unskilled workers in industrial areas such as Noida and Ghaziabad, raising wages from ₹11,313 to ₹13,690 per month. It is also important to note that minimum wages in Uttar Pradesh vary by location. Workers in industrial districts such as Gautam Buddha Nagar and Ghaziabad receive higher wages than those in municipal areas and other districts.

However, nominal wage increases tell only part of the story. Consumer prices for industrial workers, a key measure of inflation, have also risen significantly over the same period **(Chart 4)**. Based on CPI-IW data from the Labour Bureau, price increases across key Delhi-NCR industrial centres range from about 43.7% to 52.7% since 2016. In Delhi, the increase stands at about 43.7%, while in Gurugram and Ghaziabad, it exceeds 50%. Across Uttar Pradesh's industrial centres including Kanpur, Lucknow, Varanasi and Agra, the increase ranges from about 49.8% to 51.5%. Even after the post-protest revision, workers argue that the increase in wage is nominal and that they are constrained by costs of living.

The pressure has intensified in recent months, as several industrial units have been affected by rising input costs. First due to U.S. tariffs and more recently due to disruptions linked to the Strait of Hormuz. But trade unions argue that the burden is being disproportionately passed on to labour. "Whatever be the pressure over the industries... it cannot be transferred to the workers," the CITU leader said. For workers, many of whom are migrants, the impact is immediate and visible in everyday expenses. "Which worker has an LPG connection?..They rely on the retail market," he said, adding that the cost of cooking fuel has risen around ₹3,000-₹4,000 in the last month.

Data suggests that the issue is not merely about wages, but about the nature of employment itself.

(Inputs from Mayank Kumar and Ashok Kumar)

Reading into contracts

The data were sourced from the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), the Annual Survey of Industries (ASI), the Labour Department and the Labour Bureau

CHART 1: Top 10 States with highest share of workers lacking paid leave, written contracts, and social security benefits (in %)

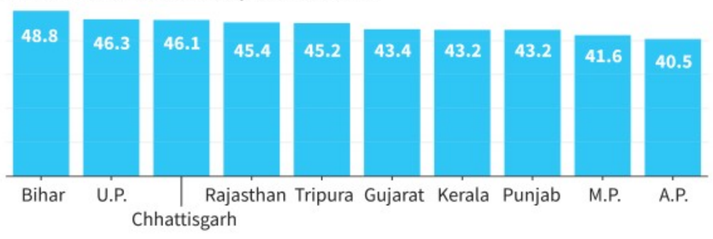


CHART 2: The share of contract workers in total industrial employment (in %)

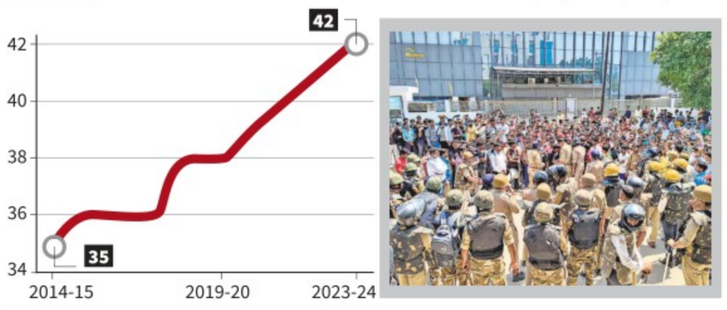


CHART 3: The change in minimum wages for unskilled workers across Delhi, Haryana, and Uttar Pradesh

State	Past minimum wage for unskilled workers (in ₹)	Revised minimum wage for unskilled workers (in ₹)	Estimated wage increase (in %)
Delhi	9,568	18,456	92.9
Haryana	8,070.44	15,220.71	88.6
Uttar Pradesh	7,107.64	12,356-13,690 *(Varies by district/municipal corporation)*	73.8% - 92.6%

Note: Past minimum wage figures correspond to April 1, 2016 (Delhi); July 1, 2016 (Haryana); and April 1, 2016 (Uttar Pradesh). Revised minimum wage figures correspond to April 1, 2025 (Delhi); April 9, 2026 (Haryana); and April 14, 2026 (Uttar Pradesh)

CHART 4: The industrial centre-wise increase in consumer price index for industrial workers (CPI-IW)

State	Industrial centre	Increase (in %)
Delhi	Delhi	43.7%
Haryana	Yamunanagar	52.6%
Haryana	Faridabad	48.1%
Haryana	Gurugram	52.7%
Uttar Pradesh	Ghaziabad/Noida	51.3%
Uttar Pradesh	Agra	51.5%
Uttar Pradesh	Kanpur	49.8%
Uttar Pradesh	Varanasi	50.6%
Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow	50.7%

FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO APRIL 20, 1976

Meteors used for radio link

New Delhi, April 19: Scientists have sent signals from Dehru Dun to Waltair, a distance of 1,760 km by bouncing radio waves of meteors.

The meteors used for radio communication were midway between the two towns and about 100 km above the ground.

Radio waves at 48.2 megacycles were aimed at the meteors from the Himalayas Radio Propagation Unit (HRPU) at Dehru Dun. The echoes were picked up by an oversized television antenna at the Space Research Laboratory in the Physics Department of Andhra University in Waltair.

Signals from a low power transmitter could be transmitted this way from Dehra Dun to Waltair.

It has been known for a long time that trails left behind by passing meteors are capable of scattering radio waves of frequencies higher than those used for normal ionospheric transmission. In India, the use of meteors in Very High Frequency (VHF) communications is under study by Dr. E. Bhagirata Rao of HRPU, and by Dr. B. Ramachandra Rao, Dr. M. Srirama Rao, Dr. S. Raja Ratnam and by Dr. D.A.V. Krishna Rao of Andhra University. They have reported their preliminary findings about radio meteors in the latest issue of the Indian Journal of Radio and Space Physics.

Meteors criss-cross the sky throughout the year. But their activity is highest during meteoric "showers" that occur on predictable dates 80 or 40 times a year.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO APRIL 20, 1926

Mill strike in Bengal

Calcutta, April 19: A serious situation has arisen out of the strikes of weavers of the India Jate Mills, Serampore on Thursday last. Following the example of these men, the workers of the Augus Anglo-India Alliance and Alexandra Mills in the districts of Hooghly and the Twenty-four Parganas have gone on strike on the question of wages and working hours, thus rendering about 30,000 men idle.

It is reported that the Head-Clerk of the Angus Jute Mills at Bhagdreswar was seriously assaulted by the strikers as he was suspected to have had much to do with the reduction of wages, and that the Mill building was damaged to a certain extent.

The strike at Gouripore Mill at Naibati has come to an end.

From Page One

Talks today, Trump says as Iran blocks Strait

"If they don't, the United States is going to knock out every single Power Plant, and every single Bridge, in Iran," Mr. Trump wrote.

It remained unclear whether either side had shifted their stances on unresolved issues that derailed the last round of negotiations, including Iran's nuclear enrichment program, its regional proxies and control over the Strait of Hormuz.

Mr. Ghalibaf, who is Iran's chief negotiator in talks with the U.S., said before Mr. Trump's latest comments that Iran still was seeking peace despite the blockade and deep-seated distrust of Washington.

"There will be no retreat in the field of diplomacy," he said, acknowledging that the gap between the two sides remained wide.

Iran's Foreign Ministry said that the U.S. naval blockade on Iranian ports is a violation of the ceasefire as well as an "unlawful and criminal" act.

"The United States' so-called 'blockade' of Iran's ports or coastline is not only a violation of Pakistani-mediated ceasefire but also both unlawful and criminal," said Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmaeil Baqaei in a post on X.

"Moreover, by deliberately inflicting collective punishment on the Iranian population, it amounts to war crime and crime against humanity," Mr. Baqaei added.

With days until the ceasefire in place between the U.S. and Iran runs out, Iran on Saturday said it had received new proposals from the United States, and Pakistani mediators were working to arrange another round of direct negotiations in the coming days.

The U.S. and Iran held rare direct talks in Pakistan on April 11 and 12 in Islamabad aimed at ending their conflict, but the talks concluded without any agreement.

Pakistani authorities began tightening security in the capital, Islamabad. A regional official involved in the mediation efforts said that mediators were finalising the preparations and that U.S. advance security teams were already on the ground.

(With AFP inputs)

Students, kin of diplomats return to India from Iran

Amid tenuous ceasefire between Iran and U.S., groups undertake gruelling journeys to cross into Azerbaijan and Armenia; over 2,400 Indians have been assisted to leave Iran since the war

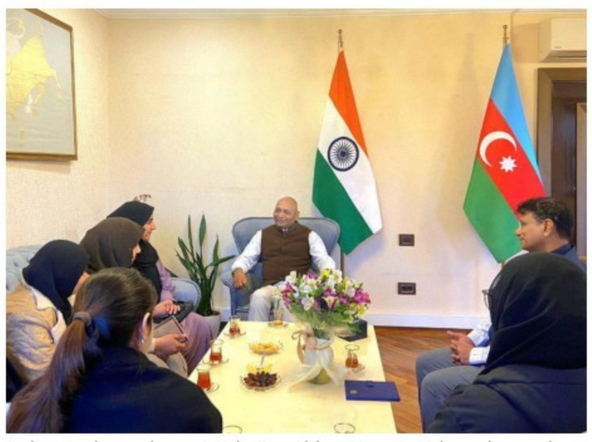
Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

Braving the conflict, a gruelling drive, and long waits at the border, a batch of Indians returned from Iran over the weekend, including all family members of Indian diplomats based there, using the pause in hostilities to make their way back.

The return journey of the groups - which came over the Azerbaijan border and flew back from Baku, and over the border to Armenia - was coordinated by the Indian Embassy in Tehran liaising with the Iranian government during the two-week U.S.-Iran ceasefire announced on April 8, officials told *The Hindu*.

More than 2,400 Indians have been assisted to leave Iran since the start of the war, including medical students, fishermen, workers, seafarers, a few business travellers, and about 150 religious seminary students, with the embassy organising travel and living arrangements.

Among the latest batch, 34 family members of Indian diplomats, including 16 children, and teachers at the Kendriya Vidyalaya in Tehran travelled through the Iran-Azerbaijan border at Astara. The route involved a nine-hour drive and then a wait of some days at the border.



Indian Ambassador to Azerbaijan Abhay Kumar with students who were evacuated from Iran. MEA

A few others, including the family members of those posted at the Indian consulate in Bandar Abbas, took the longer route of about 30 hours by road to the Armenian border and then to the capital Yerevan.

While the families of diplomats and Indian staff had stayed through the worst of the conflict and bombardment by U.S.-Israel across Iran from February 28, with most of them living inside the embassy itself, the government decided to use the ceasefire period to bring them back.

The war saw many areas in the capital Tehran flattened, and although the Indian Embassy and its surrounding areas were not targeted by U.S.-Israel strikes, powerful explosions could be heard consistently, an official said. In addition, regular food supplies became a worry.

Finally, concerns escalated as the U.S.-set deadline for Iran to comply with its demands drew to a close, and U.S. President Donald Trump issued a warning that a "civilization will die".

Amid the tenuous ceasefire that followed, the government decided to pull out all remaining embassy staff members at the first opportunity. Dozens of Indians, mostly students, who had earlier defied the government's advisories to evacuate from Iran decided to leave.

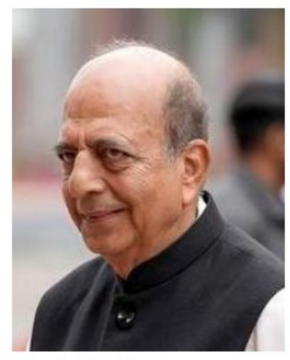
The Indian Embassy coordinated the convoys along the road that took about nine hours from Tehran to Astara.

While they did not face too many stops along the way, a number of intimidating checkpoints manned by the paramilitary Basij militia, slowed them down. As they neared Astara, however, another problem emerged.

"The Azeri government has been more [strict] with visas and only allowed eight to 10 persons to cross in one day... It took several days for all the family members to get across to Baku," said a source who was aware of the travellers' ordeal. Iranian officials helped with exit permits at the border, the source added.

Govt. likely to name Dinesh Trivedi as envoy to Bangladesh

Nistula Hebbar
Kallol Bhattacherjee
NEW DELHI



Dinesh Trivedi

Dinesh Trivedi, former Union Minister and leading figure of the BJP in West Bengal, is expected to be the next Indian envoy to Bangladesh, highly placed sources have confirmed. India's relation with Bangladesh hit a difficult phase with the overthrow of the Awami League government in August 2024 and attempts are currently on to engage the government of Prime Minister Tarique Rahman, who led the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) to a resounding victory in the February 12 election.

The current Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh, Pranay Verma, will be India's new envoy to Belgium and the European Union, and an announcement to that effect was made on April 10 by the Ministry of External Affairs, intensifying the search for his replacement in Dhaka. Diplomatic sources have told *The Hindu* that an agreement, a diplomatic document that confirms appointment of a new envoy, has been sent by India to Bangladesh, and Dhaka is currently completing the necessary process before Mr. Trivedi takes charge of the Indian High Commission. The timing of the appointment is crucial as Bangladesh's new government needs support to deal with the acute energy crisis that has erupted in the country.

Bangladesh is vital to India's regional diplomacy as a top trading partner, though recent visa disruptions have hurt commercial ties.

Mr. Trivedi hails from a Kolkata-based Gujarati family and is known for his proficiency in multiple languages, including Bengali. While key diplomatic posts are often given to political appointees, the Indian High Commission in Dhaka has traditionally been led by senior IFS officials; however, for the first time, a political figure is appointed to Dhaka.

23 killed in explosion at fireworks factory in T.N.

Some 40 workers, men and women, were busy making firecrackers inside and outside the shed. "All these workers were supposed to be working in their sheds located away from [the site] where the chemical is mixed.

But they violated safety norms," the Collector said.

Additional medical teams mobilised

Mr. Sukhaputra said additional medical teams have been mobilised at the Virudhunagar Hospital. Besides, efforts are on to carry out post-mortem, with experts being brought in from Government Rajaji Hospital in Madurai.

"For any fireworks unit licensed by the District Revenue Officer, only 11 or 12 workers can be employed at any given point of time. If That being the case, how can 23 persons die in a single accident," asked a fireworks factory owner. He feared that licensed units would face the brunt of knee-jerk reaction from the officials now.

In licensed units, only four workers are usually allowed in a working shed.

2 U.S. citizens detained at Srinagar airport over GPS device

The Hindu Bureau
SRINAGAR

The Jammu and Kashmir police on Sunday detained two U.S. nationals at the Srinagar airport following the recovery of a Global Positioning System (GPS) device and a communicator.

A senior police officer told *The Hindu* that the matter was being investigated. Officials said the police during searches spotted the Garmin GPS device, which can be operated through satellite, in a travel handbag. Thereafter, two U.S. citizens were deboarded and the device was seized. The two were identified as Jeffrey Scott Prather from Montana and Haldar Koushik, an Indian-origin person settled in the U.S.

They were questioned and Mr. Koushik was released, "as nothing was found from his possession". Officials said the two were planning to visit Ladakh but cancelled the trip after the Srinagar-Leh highway was closed due to bad weather.

On the draw

'Implement women's Act without any conditions'

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The National Coalition for Women's Reservation, a platform of women's organisations and leaders, on Sunday called for the removal of all references to Census and delimitation to the women's reservation Act, 2023, which gave 33% quota to women in legislatures. It said necessary amendments should be made to the Act during the Monsoon Session of Parliament.

Attending a press conference here, leaders of the platform said they unequivocally condemned the attempts to weaponise gender justice for political gain and the imposition of conditionalities that effectively stalled the implementation of 33% reservation for women. The Opposition parties had on Friday defeated the Constitution (131st) Amendment Bill, 2026, which sought to redistribute Lok Sabha seats to expedite the implementation of women's reservation.

Senior CPI leader Annie Raja said Prime Minister Narendra Modi should apologise to the women for not showing any sincerity towards the legislation. She said by linking women's reservation with delimitation and Census, the Centre effectively blocked the legislation.

In a statement, about 800 organisations and activists linked to the coalition said, "It is deeply unbecoming of a Prime Minister to weaponise gender justice for political gain – using a national platform to vilify opponents and manufacture a false narrative of betrayal of women, rather than seeking the democratic consensus necessary for such a historic constitutional reform. The imposition of conditionalities in the Act in 2023 was a real betrayal, and their reinforcement through the amendment Bill is a direct insult to all women."

Five deaths and no arrests as Manipur sees fresh violence

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

Since April 7, Manipur has witnessed five killings, including that of two children, but there have been no arrests in any of the cases so far. The Bishnupur-Churachandpur road has remained blocked for the past 12 days, hindering the National Investigation Agency (NIA)'s investigation into the April 7 killing of two children at Tronglaobi, Bishnupur, a senior government official said.

As the attackers remain unidentified, local people have taken to the streets multiple times in the past week and have clashed with security forces demanding arrest of the attackers, leaving scores of people injured.

The siblings, whose father is a BSF jawan, were sleeping when a "bomb" allegedly launched from a distance of 100-150 metres exploded in their house. Another government official said probe agencies were yet to receive any CCTV footage from the area that could help them identify the attackers as an unexploded device – a galvanised iron pipe with a factory-made rocket tip and wires dangling from its sides – was also recovered near the house.

Meitei civil society groups have accused Kuki-Zo insurgent groups in Churachandpur of being behind the attack.

"No civil supplies are coming to Pherzawl and Churachandpur from Imphal side as the roads remain blocked. The essentials are being routed from Silchar in Assam and Aizawl in Mizoram. Even if Kuki-Zo groups are involved, due to the blockade, the NIA team has not been able to visit Churachandpur for the investigation," the first government official said. On April 10, a BSF jawan was killed in "unprovoked firing by militants" in the Litan area of Ukhrul district.

The Naga-dominated Litan area of Ukhrul has witnessed a wave of violence and arson between Nagas and Kukis since February 7, three days after Yumnam Khemchand Singh was installed as the new Chief Minister of the ethnic-violence affected State that remained under President's Rule for a year.

On Saturday, suspected militants ambushed the vehicles of civilians on National Highway no. 202 in Ukhrul, killing two Tangkhul Naga men, including a retired soldier.

A government source said that preliminary probe into Saturday's killings had indicated the use of an automatic weapon which is used by hardened militant groups active in the region. Also on April 7, three others were killed when Central Reserve Police Force personnel opened fire at a mob that tried to loot the armoury at Gelmol, 1.5 km from Tronglaobi. Gelmol has been a buffer zone between Meitei-dominated Bishnupur and Kuki-Zo-dominated Churachandpur since 2023.

According to Losii Dikho, Manipur's Deputy Chief Minister, the outreach by Mr. Singh is being appreciated by all communities and the recent incidents could be an attempt to instigate unrest in the State.

Amid shutdown, Manipur group calls for BJP boycott

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

Amid continued violence and a shutdown, an influential organisation in Manipur has announced a boycott of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the State.

The Coordinating Committee on Manipur Integrity (COCOMI), a conglomerate of Meitei civil society organisations in the Imphal Valley, on Sunday urged people to avoid any function of the BJP or its leaders. It also demanded a statement from Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh, explaining why his government has been unable to stop the attacks on civilians.

"He (the Chief Minister) is not connected to any civil society organisation of any community in Manipur. He seems to be on a personal trip, forgetting that 'narco-terrorists' and militants are moving around with the core agenda of killing innocent people," COCOMI leader Shanta Nahakpam told journalists in the State's capital, Imphal.

Deserted streets in Imphal Valley on Sunday, the first day of a shutdown. ANI VIDEO GRAB

Narco-terrorist is a term non-Kuki indigenous communities in Manipur use for armed Kuki-Zo groups, mostly in a Suspension of Operations agreement with the government. Mr. Nahakpam said the people of Manipur believe the BJP was responsible for failing to push the Centre to prevent the "proxy war" by these groups against the indigenous peoples.

This failure justified the call to boycott the BJP and its activities in Manipur, the COCOMI leader said, as anger spilt onto the streets.

Normal activities were affected across the five districts of Imphal Valley on Sunday, the first day of a five-day shutdown called by Meitei women's groups and civil society organisations. They set April 25 as the deadline for the authorities to arrest all those responsible for a bomb attack that killed two minors – a five-year-old boy and a six-month-old girl – in the Tronglaobi area of Bishnupur district.

Kuki extremists allegedly carried out the attack, although Kuki organisations denied any involvement. Later, the shutdown was extended to seven days.

Manipur Home Minister Govindas Konthoujam appealed to the organisations to withdraw the shutdown in the interest of people's welfare.

The appeal, however, cut no ice, with an apex Naga body joining the Meitei groups to announce a three-day shutdown across Naga-inhabited areas from April 20 midnight. The United Naga Council (UNC) said the shutdown was called "as a collective expression of condemnation" of the killing of two Tangkhul Naga men on Saturday.

ED searches house of Kolkata police officer

Shrabana Chatterjee
KOLKATA

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Sunday conducted searches at the residence of Kolkata Police Deputy Commissioner Shantanu Sinha Biswas and on premises linked to a businessman in a money laundering case.

This is the second time in three days that Central agencies have carried out searches across the city, including at the houses of Trinamool Congress candidates, just days ahead of the Assembly election.

On Sunday evening, businessman Jay Kamdar, managing director of Sun Enterprise, was arrested after hours of questioning. His name surfaced during searches at the house absconding strongman Biswajit Poddar.

Though Mr. Poddar had come on live on social media, he has eluded arrest.

The Enforcement Directorate searched three premises in the case, two belonging to Mr. Biswas and one of Mr. Kamdar.

ASSEMBLY POLLS

EC takes action against 11,000 'unlawful' posts

The Election Commission (EC) on Sunday said it had taken action against 11,000 "unlawful" social media posts and other content related to the election to five Assemblies. The EC pointed to its direction that any misleading or unlawful AI-generated or manipulated content had to be acted upon within three hours of being brought to the notice of the social media platforms. Political parties and candidates have to ensure that synthetically generated or AI-altered content used for campaigning is labelled as "AI-generated", "digitally enhanced" or "synthetic content", along with disclosure of the originating entity. Since the elections were announced on March 15, over 11,000 such social media posts/URLs have been identified and acted upon. PTI

Social media platforms have to take action against these posts within three hours. GETTY IMAGES

A.P. CM to go on campaign tour in Tamil Nadu

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu will embark on a two-day campaign tour in Tamil Nadu beginning on Monday, as part of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA)'s intensified outreach in the State.

The visit is aimed at energising party cadre, strengthening voter engagement, and reinforcing its development-oriented narrative.

The Chief Minister will commence his tour in Coimbatore, where he is scheduled to address a public meeting . He will then travel to Hosur and proceed to Thalli to participate in a public rally.

Later, Mr. Naidu will arrive in Chennai and take part in a major roadshow in Avadi.

On the second day, the Chief Minister will visit Madurai before heading to Sattur.

"Corruption allegations have become a pattern in the DMK government. It is time to raise your voice and bid farewell to the ruling dispensation

RAJNATH SINGH
Union Defence Minister

Body of missing Assam polling official retrieved

The police in central Assam's Karbi Anglong district have recovered the body of a polling official, who went missing during polling hours on April 9. A district official said on Sunday that the body of Cornelius Kindu was recovered from the remote Rongwongwey area. The body has been sent for autopsy.

"A new dawn will come, a government that will look after aspirations of mothers, sisters, youth, elderly and farmers will be installed in Bengal

NITIN NABIN
BJP president

I-PAC co-founder Vinesh Chandel being produced at a judge's residence in New Delhi on April 14 after his arrest by the ED in the Bengal coal scam case. ANI

I-PAC under pressure to leave Bengal, says Mamata

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

With just four days to go for polling in the first phase of the West Bengal Assembly election, the political discourse in the State was abuzz on Sunday over speculation that the political consultancy firm I-PAC, which manages the Trinamool Congress's campaign, has suspended operations in the State.

While the Trinamool leadership quickly dismissed the speculation, there were reports by certain media outlets claiming that the I-PAC team in West Bengal had been asked to go on leave for 20 days. There was no response from I-PAC over the reports of its suspension of operations.

"We have come across a media report claiming that I-PAC has "halted its operations in West Bengal for the next 20 days". This claim is completely baseless and appears to be a deliberate attempt to create confusion on the ground, the Trinamool Congress posted on social media.

The State's ruling party further said the I-PAC team in the State remained fully engaged with the party, and campaign operations continued as planned.

"These narratives are a deliberate attempt to distract from the clear mood on the ground. The people of Bengal are fully capable of seeing through these attempts and will respond democratically," the statement said. It added that the State would not be swayed by misinformation or intimidation and would respond decisively.

Later in the day, Trinamool Congress chairperson and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said that the agency was being pressured to leave West Bengal. She said that she would hire everyone in the firm and absorb them in the party. She said that she had a word with party general secretary Abhishek Banerjee over the developments.

"You are asking these agencies, who work for our party, to leave Bengal. Why? You have 50 agencies; we have only one. Listen, if you try to intimidate them, they will join my party. We will give them jobs. We will take care of them. Remember this, I will not let a single person lose their job," Ms. Banerjee said at a public meeting.

I-PAC has been the backbone of the planning and election strategy for the Trinamool for the past several elections. In 2021, the political consultancy firm under the leadership of Prashant Kishor successfully resisted the onslaught of the BJP. The party then engaged I-PAC in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, in which the Trinamool increased its seats to 29 from 22 in 2019.

If I-PAC suspends its operations at this crucial juncture, the Trinamool will face a serious challenge against the well-oiled election machinery of the BJP. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah are holding multiple rallies along with Chief Ministers of several BJP-ruled States.

On January 8, 2026, the Enforcement Directorate conducted searches at the office and residence of I-PAC co-founder Pratik Jain in connection with a coal smuggling scam. The Chief Minister intervened during the search and allegedly took documents from the possession of the ED officials. The ED has approached the Supreme Court against Ms. Banerjee, and the case is pending.

On April 13, the ED arrested Vinesh Chandel, a director and co-founder of I-PAC, in a money-laundering case linked to an alleged coal scam in the State. Searches were held in several States and cities in connection with the coal smuggling scam.

Mining-hit Raniganj region takes poll promises with a pinch of salt

Land subsidence, relocation concerns, and livelihood fears dominate electoral discourse in Raniganj coal belt; in Harishpur and Jamuria, families who lost their homes because of land subsidence are being rehabilitated in single-room flats; people are demanding compensation for land instead

GROUND REPORT

Shrabana Chatterjee
PASCHIM BARDHAMAN

As elections approach, promises of rehabilitation take centre stage in India's second largest and oldest coal mining region in Raniganj in Paschim Bardhaman district of West Bengal. But cracks in homes, unstable ground underneath, and failed rehabilitation promises have haunted residents of the area through many elections.

Harishpur is among the worst-affected areas due to land subsidence in Raniganj. In 2020, residents suffered a massive jolt which cracked open many homes, reduced some to dust, and left several families homeless.

"We will not accept this rehabilitation. They must compensate us for our land and homes. We will build our own homes at a safer place. We do not want to live in those pigeonholes. No village dweller can think of living on the fourth floor without their land and cattle," Santosh Chowdhury, a resident of Harishpur, said.

Around 150 families spent many sleepless nights in staff quarters of Eastern Coalfields Ltd., with three families packed into a single flat. Slowly, residents of Harishpur began risking their lives by returning to their dilapidated homes. For the past six years, they have lived in a constant state of fear of losing everything overnight. Many houses are now deserted as residents have left with no hope of proper rehabilitation in sight.

Mr. Chowdhury, a teacher at the local Harishpur Free Primary School, said he fears that if they move to the rehabilitation centre near the Andal airport, at least 10 km away, neither his school nor the villagers' livelihoods will survive.

Local people said they were not consulted before the rehabilitation plans were drawn up. They said the Asansol Durgapur Development Authority and the Union and State governments keep passing the responsibility to each other, leaving residents to suffer.

Three weeks ago, at a public rally, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee asked residents of vulnerable locations to move to the rehabilitation centres built by the government.

"Life is most important. Not one, but we will give you two flats each. We will also give you money to shift. Total ₹10 lakh each for a family, we have estimated," Ms. Banerjee said. She said that if a sudden landslide took place in coal mining areas, thousands of lives could be los.

Unfulfilled demands: Hundreds of rehabilitation buildings and flats remain empty as local people refuse to take them without an assurance of livelihood. SHRABANA CHATTERJEE

However, Kalobaran Mondal, the Trinamool candidate for the Assembly election from Raniganj, said that people were reluctant to shift because the houses were very small.

"They are asking for land where they can make their own houses. They fear that they will not find employment in the new area," Mr. Mondal added.

Naran Bauri of the CPI (M), a candidate from Raniganj, said that coal mines so close to human habitation should not be allowed. "How will the people find work if they are shifted so far away from their hometown," Mr. Bauri asked.

Failed rehabilitation

Rehabilitation is not a new issue in the Raniganj coal belt. Adjacent to Harishpur are the coal mines of the Jamuria constituency, part of the Raniganj coal belt, where about 160 families were shifted from their rural homes in Sripur to flats at least 15 km away in the industrial area of Hingelgora. Their homes crumbled in 2011 after land subsidence. They lived in camps for over 11 years before being moved to the new flats in 2022.

Families received ₹10,000 as shifting costs and the equivalent of 500 days of daily wages, but no compensation for the land.

"Once they put us here, they forgot about us. No politicians or authorities come here any more," Raghubir Prasad, a local activist, said.

With no land or cattle, members of the community are now forced to work in nearby industries. Thousands of flats remain vacant as villagers refuse to accept rehabilitation.

"At least five people here have died of lung cancer in the past three years. This area is so polluted due to the factories," Mr. Prasad said.

These 160 families were also promised two flats each. But when they arrived, they received only one flat each, forcing families of four to six members to live in a single-room flat.

"There is no holistic approach to rehabilitation. The families are stuffed into these caged flats like cattle. They have to survive the high pollution levels even though they are not related to it," Sudipta Pal, a human rights activist and joint secretary of the ECL (Asansol-Durgapur) Workers Union, said. She added that the government is constructing rehabilitation projects across Raniganj to ease immediate concerns, but lacks a long-term approach to help the displaced people.

Trinamool conspired with Cong. to betray women, says Modi in Bengal

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

Addressing election meetings in West Bengal, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday accused the ruling Trinamool Congress of conspiring with the Congress and "betraying" women by preventing the passage of the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill, 2026 in Parliament.

He said the women of the State should punish the Trinamool in the upcoming Assembly polls.

"Trinamool has betrayed the women of Bengal one more time. The sisters of Bengal wanted 33% reservation. Modi tried to ensure that. But Trinamool did not want more number of women from Bengal to become MPs and MLAs because they will challenge the *mahajungle raaj* of the Trinamool," Mr. Modi said at a public meeting at Bishnupur in Bankura.

Claiming that the Trinamool and the Congress did not allow the women's reservation Bill to pass, he said, "When you vote, you will have to punish Trinamool for this crime."

His remarks came two days after the BJP-led government failed to secure passage of the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill in the Lok Sabha. The Bill sought to redistribute Lok Sabha seats on the basis of the 2011 Census to expedite the implementation of women's reservation.

Narendra Modi having *jhalmuri*, a puffed rice snack, during a break from public meetings in West Bengal on Sunday. ANI

Mr. Modi addressed four public meetings in Bankura, Purulia, Jhargram, and Paschim Medinipur in the tribal-dominated south West Bengal, where polling will be held on April 23. In his address, Mr. Modi described the Trinamool as 'anti-tribal', stating that the party had fielded a candidate against President Droupadi Murmu in the Presidential election.

"The whole world respects Droupadi Murmu but the Trinamool which is anti-tribal had insulted her," Mr. Modi said referring to an incident last month in Darjeeling district where proper protocol was not accorded to the President.

Highlighting the schemes of the Union government, Mr. Modi said in the past 15 years, the Trinamool had ignored tribals. "No education, no employment and no irrigation," he said. Pointing out that there are particularly vulnerable tribal groups such as Toto, Lodha, and Sabar for whom benefits are being given under the PM JANMAN Yojana, Mr. Modi alleged that the State government had not implemented the scheme.

The Prime Minister accused the Mamata Banerjee government of pursuing politics that favoured "infiltrators" and said that the upcoming Assembly election "was a battle to save the State's identity".

"The path that the Trinamool is treading is very dangerous. The Trinamool wants to form a government of infiltrators and for infiltrators. A government that will protect only the religion, language, and customs of the infiltrators, rather than those of the people of Bengal," he said.

Mr. Modi came down heavily on those behind 'Trinamool-run syndicates' and said that they had the last chance to avoid facing the rule of law. "Surrender at your nearest police stations before April 23. Because after May 4, none of you will be spared," he said.

Mamata retorts

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee responded to the charge of the Prime Minister and said that after losing in Parliament, he was attempting a 'face-saving' exercise. "Being Prime Minister of the country, you are using a government machinery like Doordarshan for spreading political misinformation. The women's reservation Bill was passed on September 25, 2023, with 450 votes in favour. Where has the Bill disappeared? Why was no notification done?" Ms. Banerjee said.

She said the real game plan was not the interest of women but delimitation and increasing the number of Lok Sabha seats to 850.

Shah slams Cong., DMK for opposing Bill in Lok Sabha

The Hindu Bureau
ERODE

BJP leader and Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Sunday that the actions of the Congress and the DMK in opposing the Constitution Amendment Bill linked to delimitation would not be tolerated under any circumstances.

The proposed legislation will be passed to ensure significant benefits for women, he said at the campaign for the party's Modakkurichi Assembly constituency candidate, S. Kirthika, at Sivagiri.

He said the Centre introduced the Bill in Parliament to ensure greater participation of women in the political process but it was obstructed by the Congress and the DMK.

Efforts to expand women's representation in Parliament and the Assemblies were thwarted by these parties, he said.

Steps linked to delimitation and constituency restructuring were proposed to enhance women's representation but were opposed with a "narrow objective" to prevent an increase in seats in Tamil Nadu and deny women greater opportunities, Mr. Shah said.

Amit Shah

Women had been denied crucial opportunities due to the actions of the Congress and the DMK, and such practices will not be tolerated, he added.

Mr. Shah said the AIADMK-led National Democratic Alliance would form the government in the State and "put a full stop" to corruption under the DMK regime.

Law and order situation

The law and order situation in the State had deteriorated. A new government will restore effective governance. The "glories and distinctions" once associated with the State will be revived, he said.

Targeting Chief Minister M.K. Stalin, Mr. Shah said his sole aim was to make his son, Udhayanidhi Stalin, the next Chief Minister.

INBRIEF

Lenskart apologises with new guide after online backlash

Following massive online backlash over a purported internal grooming document, eyewear retailer Lenskart has issued a public apology and released a standardised 'In-Store Style Guide' that allows employees to wear religious and cultural symbols at work. The new policy "explicitly and unambiguously" welcomes all symbols of faith carried by team members, including the bindi, *tilak*, *sindoor*, *kalawa*, *mangalsutra*, *kada*, hijab, and turban. Addressing the uproar a few days ago, Lenskart founder Peyush Bansal had stepped in to clarify that the viral document was an "outdated version" and did not reflect the company's current stance. PTI

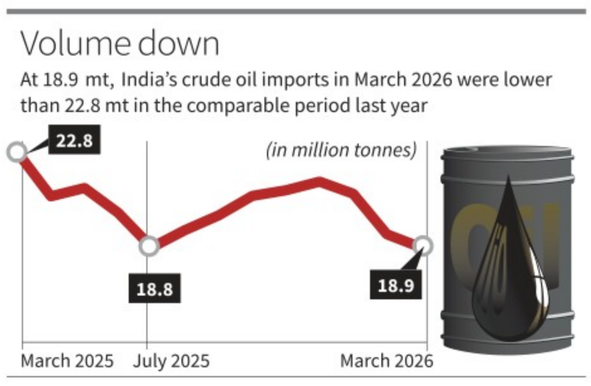
Two Indian men shot dead in Italy while leaving gurdwara

Two Indian men have been shot dead in Italy's Covo in Bergamo province just as they were leaving a warehouse used as a place of worship during a gathering for Vaisakhi festival, local media reported on Sunday . The attack occurred on April 17, a few minutes before midnight in the square in front of the Gurdwara Mata Sahib Kaur Ji in the industrial area of the town, according to *La Sicilia* newspaper. The deceased were identified as Raginder Singh, 48, a resident of Covo, and Gurmit Singh, 48, from Agnadello. The assailant allegedly approached the men, opened fire and then fled in a car, the paper reported. PTI

Amid conflict, crude oil imports declined nearly 17% in March

LPG cylinder sales to domestic households fell 8.1% in March, while those sold to non-domestic users was down almost 48%, as per official data

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI



In the first full month of the ongoing West Asia crisis, India's crude oil imports declined nearly 17% year-on-year in March, according to provisional data from the Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell (PPAC).

As a result of the decrease, New Delhi spent about 4.9% less on its crude imports during the mentioned period.

As per the provisional data, India imported 18.9 million tonnes of crude oil in March. This was lower than the 22.8 million tonnes imported in the corresponding period last year. It spent $11.7 billion compared with $12.3 billion in the corresponding period a year ago.

However, the net import bill for oil and gas combined remained nearly flat at $11 billion, marginally down from $11.3 billion in the comparable period last year.

India's basket crude price averaged $113.49 a barrel in March, compared with an average of $69.01 in February.

The consumption of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) stood at 2.379 million tonnes in March, 12.8% lower than 2.729 million tonnes consumed in the same period last year. LPG cylinder sold to domestic households fell 8.1% in March to 2.219 million tonnes, while those sold to non-domestic users was down almost 48%. Bulk LPG sales were down by a massive 75.5%.

Amid India's push for piped natural gas (PNG) to alleviate some of the pressure from LPG, imports of liquefied natural gas (LNG) surged by more than 20%.

India's total natural gas consumption rose 7.2% to 5,727 million metric standard cubic metre (MMSCM) on a year-over-year basis in March. However, it is essential to note that the PPAC, cautioning about provisional figures, held that the actual import figures of LNG could be lower due to the conflict in West Asia, which would consequently lower the consumption figures as well.

(With PTI inputs)

Centre's procurement price for potato is half of input cost: farmers

A.M. Jigeesh
NEW DELHI

A day after the Union Agriculture Ministry announced the procurement of 20 lakh tonnes of potatoes at the rate of ₹6.5 per kg (₹6,500.9 per tonne) from Uttar Pradesh, where the prices have fallen due to various factors, including unseasonal rain, farmers on Sunday said the amount was less than half of their input cost.

Welcoming the decision to procure approximately 10% of the total potato output in the State, the farmers, however, said the Centre should procure potatoes for at least ₹12 a kg.

Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU) leader Rakesh Tikait had written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the first week of March, highlighting the plight of potato farmers. Mr. Tikait had said in the letter that the Centre should announce at least ₹1,500 per quintal (₹15 per kg) as support price for potatoes. He had also demanded that industries for value addition and processing be promoted in the potato belt of the State.

Rajveer Lawaniya, BKU Agra district president and a potato farmer, told *The Hindu* that potato prices had fallen to ₹2-₹4 a kg. "Our input cost is ₹12 for a kg. For a farmer to make even a small profit, the procurement price should be ₹15 a kg. The amount announced on Saturday is far below than what we have been demanding. The harvest is over and farmers have sent the crop to cold storages. To avoid suicides of farmers in this region, the government should immediately increase the procurement price," he said.

Potato prices in U.P. have fallen due to many factors, including unseasonal rains. PTI

He added that if 10% of the produce was procured by the government for at least ₹12 a kg, it would be a huge help for the farmers.

The government on Saturday also approved the procurement of chickpea in Andhra Pradesh and pigeon pea in Karnataka.

CBI arrests senior DGCA official on graft charge

Devesh K. Pandey
NEW DELHI

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has arrested a Deputy Director-General at the Airworthiness Directorate of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), along with another person, in an alleged bribery case.

The accused persons have been identified as Mudavath Devula, a Deputy Director-General (Airworthiness Directorate) at the DGCA headquarters in Delhi; and Bharat Mathur, senior vice-president of a private company. The alleged bribe amount involved in the case is ₹2.5 lakh.

The CBI registered the FIR on April 18 based on the allegation that the official demanded undue advantage from private persons in lieu of issuing approvals and permissions of applications pending with the DGCA. The agency has searched four locations in Delhi, resulting in the seizure of ₹37 lakh in cash, gold and silver coins, and multiple digital devices. As per the DGCA, the official has been entrusted with the responsibilities of continuing airworthiness functions.

Tech diaspora in U.S. marks 75 years of IIT with event

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

As the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) celebrate 75 years, the milestone is met with pride and pragmatism.

For decades, the IIT brand has been indisputably considered the gold standard of global engineering.

However, the reality has changed now. At home, a new tier of Indian universities is churning out talent that rivals the old guard. Also, in the U.S., the IIT-ian aura is facing unprecedented pressure due to unfavourable visa rules.

At this juncture, the IIT alumni are holding their annual event - IIT2026 Global Conference - in Long Beach, California, from April 22 to 25, in what they are referring to as "a call to elevate the value of the Indian diaspora".

Multidisciplinary learning is the future for students: experts

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

At a webinar on the "Future of Multidisciplinary Learning", organised by the SRM Institute of Science and Technology (SRMIST) and *The Hindu*, experts underscored the importance of multidisciplinary learning to aid fluid thinking and to make informed career choices.

"It helps students upskill themselves and explore a plethora of hybrid careers," A. Vinay Kumar, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Science and Humanities, Management), at SRMIST, Chennai, said.

"The world is full of problems, and to be able to find a solution is the whole purpose of education. The next two decades are going to be a huge step-up for India, and students have to be future-ready," Viswanath B. Kasi, mentor, investor, and adviser, and global commodity trading professional, international trading track, said.

A. Duraisamy, Dean, Faculty of Science and Humanities at SRMIST, said universities like SRM were allotting one-third of the students' credit points towards inter-and multi-disciplinary courses.

Multidisciplinary learning improves confidence and critical thinking, and helps tackle real-world problems, Poorna Pushkala Ayyappan, technical professional adviser in technology, KBR India, said. The webinar can be viewed at *newsth.live/THSRMMY*

'Nuclear plants require lifetime commitment'

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

As India opens its nuclear power sector to private participation under the newly enacted SHANTI Act, former regulators of the nuclear energy establishment and policy veterans said that nuclear power required "lifetime commitment," and maintaining "financial security" to account for "waste management, settlement of claims (caused by radiation), and decommissioning (nuclear power plants).

The Sustainable Harnessing and Advancement of Nuclear Energy for Transforming India (SHANTI) Act, 2025, as the government has articulated repeatedly, is to help India raise its installed nuclear power capacity from the existing 8.7 gigawatt (GW) to 100 GW by 2047. Unlike the previous half-century, it hopes to achieve this by allowing, in theory, private companies to run nuclear power plants and harness foreign funds for the purpose. Ravi Grover, member, Atomic Energy Commission and veteran nuclear engineer, at a talk in New Delhi on Saturday, said the SHANTI Act clearly prescribed duties and liabilities that power plant operators must adhere to, whether in the private or public sector.

The SHANTI Act reflects the effort to modernise the laws governing the nuclear sector.

"The prime responsibility for safety, security and safeguards lies with the licensee...Section 10 of the Act clearly and transparently spells out what a newcomer to the sector should know...there is no place for indulging in regulatory tricks. No one can fudge the half life of a radioisotope. If it is 30 years, it remains 30 years," he said.

Rajan Raghavan, vice-president, Tata Consulting Engineers Ltd., who represented Indian private sector companies interested in expanding their presence in India's nuclear power sector, said four priorities shaped investment decisions: site selection, affordable technology, government hand-holding, and tariff viability.

The 700 MW indigenous pressurised heavy-water reactor, Mr. Raghavan said, which the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd. (NPCIL) – a public sector company which is the sole operator of nuclear plants – plans to deploy in fleet mode over the next 10 to 12 years, was the "natural choice".

The 220 MW design, though indigenous, was finalised 15 years ago and would need substantial rework to meet current regulatory and safety benchmarks.

Foreign reactors, he cautioned, came with prohibitive costs and lengthy design-validation timelines for Indian conditions – "two to three years" before construction could even begin.

Legal framework

Former Atomic Energy Regulatory Board Chairman. D.K. Shukla offered the regulator's view, arguing that the SHANTI Act finally provided a "unified legal framework" that separated control regulation from safety regulation – a clarity that was implicit earlier only because every player sat within the Department of Atomic Energy.

With private entities entering, he warned that issues previously considered minor would now become major. A central concern Mr. Shukla flagged was the lifetime commitment of nuclear operation demands. The Act, he noted, now required licensees to "maintain design support throughout the lifetime of the facility" – a requirement far weightier for nuclear than for other power plants, given the longer operating life. Every 10 years, operators must undertake a periodic safety review to demonstrate compliance with current safety standards.

"How do you modify or incorporate the new safety upgrade if you do not have the full-fledged design information and capability?" he said, pointing out that changes to one system can cascade adversely through others.

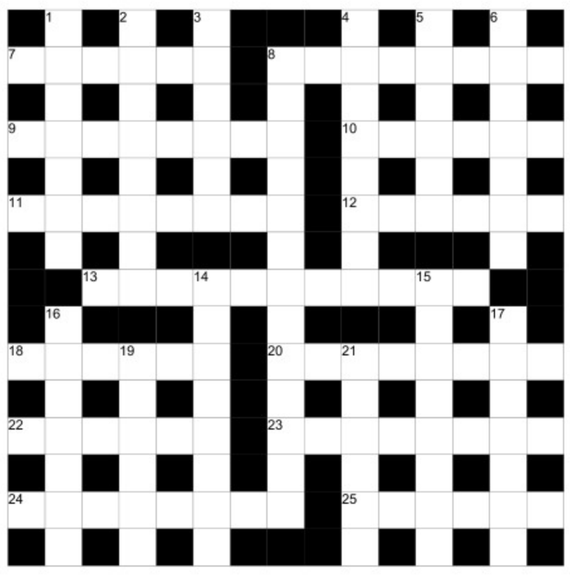
Design integrity must be preserved throughout the plant's life, he stressed, "whether technology is developed within the country or it is imported" – a pointed caution for private players contemplating foreign reactor imports without securing long-term design support arrangements.

TH CROSSWORD + 14772

(set by Pixie Dust)

Solve this puzzle online and access more puzzles at *https://thehindu.com/crosswords*

SCAN TO PLAY



ACROSS

7. Bill while cycling takes in extremely coquettish style of dancing (6)
8. On and off friend's watching volatile jamboree (8)
9. Complacent auditor conceals part of a bloomer (8)
10. Oral consent to rise (6)
11. Send journalist back with second reinforcement (8)
12. Stupid and pointless without basic strategy (6)
13. A pet's craft requirement (7,4)
18. Rebuffed, some shoot at opinionated Murphy (6)
20. Climax surrounding essentially stunning party for the soon-to- be union member (3,5)
22. Challenge accountant raising fee (6)
23. Bananas ripen over and over again to get this pungent compound (8)
24. Watched one going crazy about poetry (8)
25. Reddish-yellow stain covers corner (6)

DOWN

1. Firmly established like a frog? (4-3)
2. Legume croquettes, halibut in curried kimchi, pineapple enchiladas & avocado for starters (8)
3. Is this composition creating tensions? (6)
4. Surprisingly it's easy to film Spain's top writer (8)
5. Tailless sick cur exploited! Is it fair? (6)
6. Notice fly hovering around a nurse (7)
8. Spooner's gurgling in the cooler is short- lived? (5,2,3,3)
14. Barking kitten or is it more complicated? (8)
15. Every often Port Izmir toasted this yellow flower (8)
16. Depressed libertarian leader is expelled from congress (7)
17. Clap to a large extent with understanding (7)
19. In a foreign land, rook moves behind on a ship (6)
21. New copy line for household linen (6)

SUDOKU

4								8
	6		9		5			
	9			2				6
		8	2			7	6	
	5	6	8		1	2	4	
	1	9			4	3		
9				1			5	
			5		3		7	
6								4

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★☆☆☆☆

No.SS6856 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

Solution to previous puzzle

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

1	6	3	2	8	5	4	9	7
7	5	2	3	4	9	1	8	6
4	8	9	7	1	6	3	2	5
9	1	4	8	5	3	6	7	2
8	2	7	6	9	1	5	3	4
5	3	6	4	7	2	8	1	9
6	7	5	9	3	8	2	4	1
2	4	8	1	6	7	9	5	3
3	9	1	5	2	4	7	6	8

FAITH

The power of Achuta

In the profound dialogue of the Bhagavad Gita, the names used to address Sri Krishna are never accidental; they are keys to understanding His divine nature. Among these, the title Achuta – meaning one who never fails – holds a unique significance.

It serves as a spiritual bookend to the discourse, appearing when Arjuna speaks for the first time in Chapter 1 and again during his final surrender in Chapter 18, said Swami Mitranandaji.

Krishna the anchor: When Arjuna first cries out, "O Achuta, place my chariot between the two armies," he is more than a warrior going to command. Amid the deafening roar of conches and the impending chaos, Arjuna instinctively reaches for the one power that remains unshakable. While Arjuna is about to 'fall' into a state of grief and delusion, Krishna strands as the fixed point – the Achuta – who remains balanced and divine even in theatre of war.

There is also a lesson in equanimity. The hallmark of Achuta is an unwavering smile. Whether acting as a humble charioteer or revealing His cosmic form, Krishna's composure never falters. This quality offers a vital blueprint for our modern lives. Remaining peaceful despite external triggers (the internal stability) is important.

Maintaining a 'balance of mind' when the world attempts to tempt or provoke us, makes us resilient. Just as Krishna was the same as at the start and end of the Gita, we strive to remain rooted in our values regardless of circumstances. One should embrace the divine standard. To invoke the name of Achuta is to remind ourselves that true divinity lies in not falling from our peace.

Why mis-selling takes place

COVERNOTE

K. Nitya Kalyani

When a policy is sold under the fog of misinformation, ignorance is being taken advantage of. Also your trust, preconceptions and urgency.

It is a deception from which you will wake up only months or years later. That's when you notice the returns are not as implied, exclusions turn apparent, exit options carry a price tag or premium is more than you expected. Buying an insurance policy is not a decision you can reverse easily. If you are in the claims zone, it may be too late. You are one unhappy customer, but hardly the only one. Why does this happen? Why sell on pretence? Follow the money, said a famous detective. Mis-selling is to maximise sellers' commissions, for incentives and to reach insurer's product-specific goals .

Vested interest: Policy sold can likely earn more commission. GETTYIMAGES/ISTOCK

Hidden agenda

The seller is handling a 'difficult-to-sell' product under pressure to earn commission. His income and career depend on the sale even if under a pretence. There could be a hidden agenda in the way commissions are structured. Not all policies are equally profitable for the seller. Endowments, money-back and certainly unit-linked covers get more commissions than term covers. The policy pushed may be the one fetching more commission.

The hidden agenda could originate with the insurer. Targets are stiff and can often be product specific. For example, a newly-launched product everyone is under orders to sell.

Sellers don't receive a fixed salary and what they sell determines earnings. Sales goals are unforgiving and agents can lose licence for underperforming. Hence, insurance is hard-sold and the seller is persistent.

Non-monetary benefits

Reaching targets brings non-monetary benefits such as recognition and opportunities to attend professional conventions and meetings. Success opens doors within the insurer and industry to the world of prospective clients. Networking is everything in sales and insurance, a prime example.

And then there are the priorities of the insurance company itself. New products are introduced with premium rates calculated on several assumptions, including break-even sales levels. The best opportunity to reach the number is in the launch phase since a new policy/scheme gets maximum advertising and marketing attention and the sales teams are pumped up with enthusiasm.

Hype, misinformation

Misinformation is rarely far behind when hype is involved. This combined with target pressure makes mis-selling an easy way to succeed.

Aren't there checks and balances in the system? Definitely. The regulator speaks out against mis-selling. Suitability norms, systemic checks and documentation have been put in place to curb them.

Customers have to sign declarations about disclosure and agents are evaluated on persistence of portfolios not only sales volumes.

What can you do to avoid being a victim of mis-selling and how do the industry and regulations help you or do they fall short? We will see in the forthcoming instalment of CoverNote.

(The writer is a business journalist specialising in insurance & corporate history)

Send queries on personal finance and investing to the moneywise@thehindu.co.in ID. Our experts in personal finance will respond to select queries, but will not give specific recommendations for investment in a particular mutual fund, share or fixed deposit.

ILLUSTRATION- SAAI

Where money sits, what it becomes, why it matters?

Is your wealth a thriving organism or a ticking time bomb? Calculate the Finosis 'deep tissue scan' to see if your money is collecting moss or building muscle to survive a financial heart attack

FINOSIS SCORE II

Vaishali R. Venkat

Last week, I introduced the first layer of Finosis Score, which was primarily about checking the financial pulse and stabilising the position. This week, I want to take you deeper into Layer 2 of the Finosis Score, what I call the 'deep tissue scan'. Now that we have addressed the basic building blocks such as debt, insurance, skill sets, behaviour, etc., it is high time we looked at the 'metabolic efficiency' of the financial organism.

Even the so-called healthy person with a strong pulse can be sluggish if he/she suffers from poor nutrition or chronic over strain. In this layer, our diagnosis extends beyond money as we look at its velocity, purpose, and endurance. We are no longer just checking if the 'patient' is breathing; we are examining the quality of his/her financial DNA. Let's begin the scan...

> Asset Allocation is an important factor in your financial journey, accounting for almost 90% of the variability in portfolio's performance over time

> The scores are only indicative. Minor variations are natural, but a low score should not be equated with a strong one and vice-versa

Vital metabolism

Merely having blood isn't enough; it must not clot, but circulate throughout the body to sustain healthy life. Likewise, simply piling up money is like "clotting of wealth".

For wealth to grow healthy, it must be actively working for you even while you sleep, not just sitting idle and eroding. To check your wealth's "metabolic efficiency," let's examine four high-resolution indicators: Asset Allocation (the nutrient mix), Goal Alignment (the purpose of the cells), Liquidity (the blood flow) and Inflation Protection (the immune system). Each indicator is rated on a scale of 1 to 10, giving a total score out of 40, which can then be scaled up to 100.

Asset Allocation

It is the art of deciding how much of your money wears a 'helmet' (FD, RD, bank balance, government bonds) and how much is out there "climbing rocky mountains" (stocks or other high-risk assets). It is an important factor in your financial journey, accounting for almost 90% of the variability in portfolio's performance over time. To score this, look for concentration risk; you earn a 2 if more than 80% of wealth is trapped in one place.

Score 5 or 6 means you have variety, but your assets are vulnerable to the same systemic shock. For instance, owning five different equity funds and all crash at once when market nosedives, or having multiple properties in different cities that lose rental income during a pandemic or other crisis. You score 8 or above only when you truly diversify across at least four unrelated categories such as emergency funds, FD/RDs, government bonds, gold/silver, and stocks, ensuring that all your assets don't "catch a cold" together so you never have to sell at a loss.

Goal Alignment

Every Rupee needs a "DNA assignment." To score this, you must match your investment's tenure to its goal. You earn just 2 if money beyond emergency funds is sitting idle in a savings account or as cash without a defined purpose. A 5 or 6 means your portfolio is only partially linked to goals, creating "blurred lines", like using a long-term FD meant for your child's education to fund a car purchase today.

You score 8 or above only when every financial asset is strictly mapped to a timeline and a defined goal such as retirement, children's education, or a medical buffer.

Inflation Protection

Inflation is the silent virus eating your purchasing power. You earn a 2 if your money sits in "stagnant water" like cash or bank savings accounts, collecting moss while its real-world value rots. A 5 or 6 means you have "safe" FD/RDs that merely act as a life jacket, which keep your head above water, but you aren't moving forward.

You score 8 or above when your wealth is led by growth assets such as equities that outpace inflation, with gold and silver acting as a secondary hedge.

Liquidity

This measures how fast you can grab cash in times of need. You earn a 2 if all your wealth is "frozen" in real estate or other bonds with lock-in periods. A 5 or 6 applies to FDs or RDs, where you can access cash but only by paying a penalty or losing interest. You score 8 or above only for cash equivalent assets (like high-interest savings or Liquid Funds) which provide instant cash with zero risk to your principal.

The scores are only indicative and not absolute. Minor variations are natural, but a low score should not be equated with a strong one, and vice-versa. With that in mind, take a pen and paper, work through the scores, and see what the Finosis Score has in store for you.

Does your financial genie summon wealth, or just spin bubbles?

(The writer is an NISM & CRISIL-certified Wealth Manager and certified in NISM's Research Analyst module)

Spousal discussion: reconciling goal choice

THINKINVESTOR

Asset allocation for each goal turns easy once differences in goal choice are reconciled. The portfolio earmarked for top priority goal must be specifically conservative to cut the risk of goal failure.

Venkatesh Bangaruswamy

Earlier, we discussed on the need to create a portfolio for each goal as we have multiple risk personalities. That is, risk attitude is different for each goal. Here, we discuss why it is crucial for couples to reconcile differences in risk attitude towards each goal before starting to invest as a family.

Different attitudes

For most families, life goals include buying a house, going on a vacation, saving for retirement and financing a child's college education. It is typical for millennials and Gen Zs for both spouses to take part in investment decision processes. Hence, it is important to reconcile risk attitudes to each goal as it has a direct impact on the related portfolio's asset allocation.

How should couples reconcile risk attitude for each goal? First, each of you should list the life goals you want to pursue. Then, you must agree on the goals you want to pursue as a family; three, goals are typically reasonable to pursue at a time after accounting for current lifestyle needs. Then, the time horizon for the goal should be fixed. Note, the time horizon for child's education fund and retirement portfolio is likely to be unambiguous. The former is required when the child turns 18 and the latter at retirement.

The time horizon for other life goals may not be so easy to fix. Finally, you must prioritise goals. Other than a child's education, the goal you consider as important may not align with that of your spouse. You must each list the agreed goals based on preferred order of importance. Your priority must align with spouse's. If not, you must reconcile the differences by applying this rule: which one of the agreed goals cannot be postponed. That becomes family's top priority goal.

Conclusion

Asset allocation for each goal becomes easy once differences in goal preferences are reconciled. The portfolio earmarked for top priority goal must be conservative to cut the risk of goal failure; it must have more bonds and less equity.

Retirement portfolio, the longest horizon goal, must have more equity and less bonds. All other goals must have an asset allocation that is a function of the annual savings you want to allocate to the goal, the time horizon and the amount required to achieve the goal.

(The author offers training programmes for individuals to manage their personal investments)

Bank Fixed Deposit Rates

Bank Name	Interest Rates (%) Highest Slab	1-year Tenure	3-year Tenure	5-year Tenure
Small Finance Banks				
AU Small Finance Bank	7.10	6.35	7.10	6.75
Equitas Small Finance Bank	7.40	6.90	7.00	7.00
ESAF Small Finance Bank	8.00	4.75	6.00	5.75
Jana Small Finance Bank	7.77	7.00	7.50	7.77
Shivalik Small Finance Bank	7.80	6.00	6.75	6.25
slice Small Finance Bank	7.75	6.25	7.50	7.00
Suryoday Small Finance Bank	8.10	7.25	7.25	7.90
Ujjivan Small Finance Bank	7.45	7.25	7.20	7.20
Utkarsh Small Finance Bank	7.50	6.00	7.50	7.00
Private Sector Banks				
Axis Bank	6.45	6.25	6.45	6.45
Bandhan Bank	7.25	7.00	7.25	5.85
City Union Bank	7.00	6.80	6.50	6.25
CSB Bank	7.35	5.00	5.75	5.75
DBS Bank	6.60	6.30	6.40	6.25
DCB Bank	7.15	6.90	7.00	7.15
Federal Bank	6.75	6.25	6.75	6.40
HDFC Bank	6.50	6.25	6.45	6.40
ICICI Bank	6.50	6.25	6.45	6.50
IDFC FIRST Bank	7.40	6.50	7.00	7.00
IndusInd Bank	7.00	6.75	6.90	6.65
Jammu & Kashmir Bank	7.25	6.75	6.65	6.60
IDBI Bank	6.50	6.20	6.35	6.25
Karnataka Bank	6.75	6.50	6.15	6.15
Kotak Mahindra Bank	6.80	6.50	6.40	6.25
RBL Bank	7.20	7.00	7.20	6.70
SBM Bank India	7.85	7.10	7.10	7.00
South Indian Bank	6.80	6.25	6.20	5.70
Tamilnad Mercantile Bank	7.25	6.80	6.70	6.70
YES Bank	7.00	6.65	7.00	6.75
Public Sector Banks				
Bank of Baroda	6.45	6.10	6.25	6.30
Bank of India	6.60	6.25	6.25	6.00
Bank of Maharashtra	6.65	6.20	5.25	5.00
Canara Bank	6.60	6.25	6.25	6.25
Central Bank of India	6.50	6.20	6.00	6.00
Indian Bank	6.60	6.10	6.05	6.00
Indian Overseas Bank	6.60	6.50	6.10	6.10
Punjab National Bank	6.60	6.25	6.30	6.10
Punjab & Sind Bank	6.75	5.85	5.85	5.95
State Bank of India	6.45	6.25	6.30	6.05
Union Bank of India	6.60	6.30	6.25	6.00

Home Loan Interest Rates

Name of Lender	Loan Amount (Rs.) Upto 30 lakh	Above 30 lakh & upto 75 lakh	Above 75 lakh
			(In %)
Public Sector Banks			
State Bank of India	7.25-8.95	7.25-8.95	7.25-8.95
Bank of Baroda	7.20-9.00	7.20-9.00	7.20-9.25
Union Bank of India*	7.15-9.50	7.15-9.50	7.15-9.50
Punjab National Bank	7.30-9.30	7.25-9.20	7.25-9.20
Bank of India	7.10-10.00	7.10-10.00	7.10-10.25
Bank of Maharashtra	7.10-9.90	7.10-9.90	7.10-9.90
Punjab and Sind Bank	7.30-10.70	7.30-10.70	7.30-10.70
Indian Overseas Bank	7.10 #	7.10 #	7.10 #
Indian Bank	7.15-9.55	7.15-9.55	7.15-9.55
Central Bank of India	7.10-9.15	7.10-9.15	7.10-9.15
Private Sector Banks			
Kotak Mahindra Bank	7.70 #	7.70 #	7.70 #
ICICI Bank	7.45 #	7.45 #	7.45 #
Axis Bank	8.00-11.90	8.00-11.90	8.00 - 9.10
HSBC Bank	7.45 #	7.45 #	7.45 #
South Indian Bank	7.20 #	7.20 #	7.20 #
Karur Vysya Bank	8.50-10.65	8.50-10.65	8.50-10.65
Karnataka Bank	7.31-11.69	7.31-11.69	7.31-11.69
Federal Bank	8.30 - 10.75	7.30 - 10.75	7.30 - 9.75
Tamilnad Mercantile Bank	7.90 - 9.30	7.90 - 9.30	7.90 - 9.30
Bandhan Bank	8.41-12.58	8.41-12.58	8.41-12.58
RBL Bank	8.20 #	8.20 #	8.20 #
CSB Bank	8.30 #	8.30 #	8.30 #
HDFC Bank	7.75 #	7.75 #	7.75 #
City Union Bank	8.25-9.50	8.50-10.00	8.75-10.50
Housing Finance Companies (HFCs)			
LIC Housing Finance	7.15 #	7.15 #	7.15 #
Bajaj Housing Finance	7.15 #	7.15 #	7.15 #
Tata Capital	7.50 #	7.50 #	7.50 #
PNB Housing Finance	7.50 #	7.50 #	7.50 #
GIC Housing Finance	8.20 #	8.20 #	8.20 #
SMFG India Home Finance	10.00 #	10.00 #	10.00 #
Aditya Birla Capital	7.75 #	7.75 #	7.75 #
ICICI Home Finance	7.50 #	7.50 #	7.50 #
Godrej Housing Finance	7.60 #	7.60 #	7.60 #

***Extra interest rate concession of 0.05% to borrowers opting for insurance policy**
#Onwards Rates as on April 15 Source:Paisabazaar.com

SEOUL

N. Korea fires short-range ballistic missiles toward eastern waters

AFP

North Korea launched multiple short-range ballistic missiles toward the sea on Sunday, its neighbours said, days after the UN's nuclear watchdog warned that North Korea was making "very serious" advances in efforts to build nuclear weapons. The missiles flew about 140 km toward the country's eastern waters. AP

ATHENS

France and Greece to renew their defence pact for another five years

AFP

French President Emmanuel Macron will travel to Greece to renew a security pact between the two countries against the backdrop of the war in Iran, a Greek government official said on Sunday. Mr. Macron's visit to Greece on April 24-25 will renew the pact for a further five years, with an automatic renewal thereafter. REUTERS

JERUSALEM

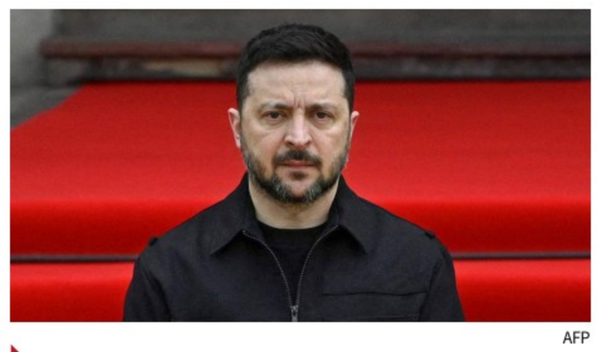
Argentina's Milei says U.S.-Israel war against Iran 'right thing to do'

REUTERS

Argentine President Javier Milei declared on Sunday that the joint U.S.-Israel war against Iran was the "right thing to do", as he signed on to the Isaac Accords, aimed at deepening ties between Israel and Latin American countries. He also highlighted his government's earlier decision to designate the IRGC a "terrorist organisation". AFP

KYIV

Zelenskyy condemns extension of sanctions waiver on Russian oil



AFP

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Sunday condemned the easing of sanctions on Russian oil after the United States extended a waiver meant to soften surging energy prices driven by the West Asia war. "Every dollar paid for Russian oil is money for the war," Mr. Zelenskyy said in a post on X. AFP

Israel says it will use 'full force' in Lebanon if soldiers face any threat

Israel Katz says IDF can strike both on the ground and from the air to protect soldiers in Lebanon, even during ceasefire; he also orders demolitions of buildings and roads, saying they endangered soldiers; another Israeli soldier killed in Lebanon

Agence France-Presse
SA NUR

Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz said on Sunday that the military had been instructed to use "full force" in Lebanon – even during the ongoing ceasefire – should Israeli troops face any threat.

"Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and I have instructed the IDF to act with full force, both on the ground and from the air, including during the ceasefire, in order to protect our soldiers in Lebanon from any threat," Mr. Katz said at a function in the occupied West Bank.

He said that the military had also been ordered to demolish any structure or roads that were "booby-trapped" and threatened soldiers. The aim is "to remove the houses in the villages near the border that served in every respect as Hezbollah terror outposts and threatened Israeli communities," Mr. Katz added.

Wiped out: A resident walks on the rubble of a building destroyed in an Israeli air strike in Tyre, southern Lebanon, on Sunday. AP

An Israeli soldier was killed in southern Lebanon on Friday – the day a 10-day ceasefire between Israel and Lebanon came into effect – when he entered a booby-trapped building, the military reported.

Mr. Katz has repeatedly said Israel would demolish houses along the border as part of efforts to establish a security zone in southern Lebanon.

On Saturday, Israeli forces carried out demolitions in the town of Bint Jbeil, the scene of intense fighting with Hezbollah prior to the recently agreed ceasefire.

"The overarching goal of the campaign in Lebanon is the disarmament of Hezbollah and the removal of threat to northern communities, through a combination of military and diplomatic measures," Mr. Katz said.

"If the Lebanese government continues to fail to uphold its obligations – the IDF will do so through continued military action."

Lebanon was drawn into the West Asia war in early March when the Tehran-backed Hezbollah launched rockets towards Israel in support of Iran.

Israel responded with massive strikes across Lebanon and an invasion of southern Lebanon.

V-P Radhakrishnan calls on Sri Lankan President

Meera Srinivasan
COLOMBO

Vice-President C.P. Radhakrishnan on Sunday called on Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake and held wide-ranging discussions on bilateral cooperation across sectors. Energy sector cooperation was among the key aspects discussed, officials said, with India emphasising that there was "no time to lose" on projects, including the proposed 'energy hub' in the eastern Trincomalee district.

"The Indian Vice-President stated that both countries expect to further strengthen cooperation in the fields of economy, education, health, tourism, investment and trade, with particular emphasis on enhancing collaboration in energy security and port development," a statement from Mr. Dissanayake's office said.

"Comprehensive discussions" were held on India-funded housing projects and programmes under the $450 million-package extended towards cyclone recovery. The two sides signed a set of Memoranda of Understanding to firm up projects as part of the assistance.

Further, the two sides discussed addressing fishermen issues "in a humanitarian manner", considering the livelihoods of fishing communities on both sides, a post on the Vice-President's official account on X said. Mr. Radhakrishnan is in Sri Lanka on a two-day visit that officials said was the first bilateral by any Vice-President. He was accompanied by Union Minister of State for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, S.P. Singh Baghel, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri and two Members of Parliament.

C.P. Radhakrishnan meets with Anura Kumara Dissanayake at the Presidential Secretariat, in Colombo on Sunday. ANI

In a press briefing later, Mr. Misri told presspersons that the Indian side thanked Mr. Dissanayake for the release of 47 Indian fishermen, who had been in Sri Lankan custody, in recent weeks. Further, citing the impact of the West Asian war on the global energy sector, he underscored the "urgency of" the proposed energy hub in Trincomalee, that included a possible fuel pipeline from south India, and the developing of the Second World War era oil tank farms in the eastern district.

Last month, Sri Lanka's Foreign Minister Vijitha Herath called the Trincomalee project the "permanent solution" to the energy crisis.

'We grow together'

In addition to calling on President Dissanayake, Mr. Radhakrishnan attended a luncheon meeting hosted by Prime Minister Harini Amarasuriya, before attending a reception with the Indian diaspora and members of the Malaiyaha Tamil community.

Speaking at the well-attended event in Colombo's Wellawatta neighbourhood – where many Tamils in the capital reside – Mr. Radhakrishnan announced that the Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) card, a multiple entry lifelong visa extended to foreign nationals of Indian origin, would now be extended to sixth generation Indian-origin Sri Lankans.

He also assured that the process of obtaining the OCI card would be simplified to help applicants. "In my meeting with your President, I said we grow together," Mr. Radhakrishnan said, emphasising that India would always stand with Sri Lanka in the country's success and struggles, be an "affectionate elder brother".

Earlier, Mr. Radhakrishnan met with Leader of Opposition Sajith Premadasa and leaders of Tamil political parties from the north, east and the hill country. "We held constructive discussions on expanding trade, deepening economic ties, and unlocking practical opportunities that can benefit both our nations," Mr. Premadasa said in a social media post.

U.K. police probing 'Iran proxies' for arson attacks

Associated Press
LONDON

British police said on Sunday they are investigating whether a string of arson attacks on Jewish sites in London are the work of Iranian proxies.

The Metropolitan Police force says counterterror officers are probing the attacks on synagogues and other sites linked to the Jewish community, as well as an attack on a Persian-language media company.

No one has been injured in the blazes, the latest of which caused minor damage to a north London synagogue on Saturday night.

Police said the attacks had been claimed by a group calling itself Harakat Ashab al-Yamin al-Islamia.

Russian hits kill at least 2 persons as Ukraine strikes Russian drone factory

Associated Press
KYIV

Russian strikes killed at least two persons in Ukraine, officials said on Sunday, as Ukraine's military struck a drone factory in southwestern Russia.

A "massive" nighttime drone strike on Chernihiv in northern Ukraine killed a 16-year-old boy and wounded four others, according to the head of the city's military administration.

Rescuers found the teenager's body as they cleared away rubble, Dmytro Bryzhynskyi reported on Telegram on Sunday morning. He said the drone strike also wounded three women and one man. Several houses were set on fire, he added.

Russian drones also attacked the southern city of Kherson on Sunday, local officials reported. A man died of his wounds after a drone hit a van driving through the city centre, according to Oleksandr Prokudin, the head of the regional administration. A second man was hospitalised with blast injuries, regional authorities said.

A firefighter works at a compound hit during overnight Russian drone strikes in the Odesa region of Ukraine. REUTERS

Russia launched 236 drones into Ukrainian territory overnight into Sunday, Ukraine's air force reported. Of those, 203 drones were shot down while 32 hit targets in 18 separate locations, it said.

Meanwhile, Ukraine hit a drone factory in the city of Taganrog, Ukraine's General Staff reported. The site lies some 55 km east of Russian-occupied eastern Ukraine in southwestern Russia.

According to the military, Ukrainian drones sparked a fire at the Atlant Aero factory, which designs and produces strike and reconnaissance drones, as well as components for more powerful UAVs that can carry guided bombs weighing up to 250 kg.

Ukraine's navy said it carried out the attack on the drone factory in southern Russia, using domestically manufactured Neptune cruise missiles.

"This defence enterprise is an important part of the Russian military-industrial complex, where drones were developed and manufactured," the navy said in an online post.

Bulgaria votes as pro-Russian ex-President leads the polls

Reuters
SOFIA

Opinion polls showed Radev's Progressive Bulgaria securing about 35% of vote, up from a month ago

Bulgarians went to the polls on Sunday in the eighth parliamentary election in five years, with the clear frontrunner, pro-Russian former President Rumen Radev, promising to end a spiral of weak, short-lived governments and stamp out widespread corruption.

Mr. Radev, a eurosceptic former fighter pilot who opposes military support for Ukraine's war effort against Moscow, stepped down from the presidency in January to run in the election, which comes after mass protests forced out the previous government in December.

A slick social media campaign, deep coffers and a pledge of stability have boosted Mr. Radev's support in the Balkan country of about 6.5 million, where voters are weary of repeated snap polls and a small group of veteran politicians widely seen as corrupt.

The cost of living is also an issue since Bulgaria, a member of the European Union and NATO, adopted the euro in January. The previous government fell amid protests against a new Budget proposing tax rises and higher social security contributions.

That and the recent political crisis appear to be more important to voters than Mr. Radev's calls to improve relations with Moscow or resume Russian oil and gas flows to Europe.

Opinion polls on Friday showed Radev's Progressive Bulgaria securing about 35% of the vote, up from a month ago. If confirmed, that would mark one of the strongest results by a single party in years.

The Kerala Minerals and Metals Ltd
(A Govt. of Kerala Undertaking),Sankaramangalam,Kollam 691583
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TENDER NOTICE

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Sl No	Tender Id	Items
1	2026_KMML_848529_1	Supply of Plate Inconnel 600
2	2026_KMML_848495_1	Supply of Sodium Hexa Meta Phosphate
3	2026_KMML_848309_1	Supply of key Bricks

Chavara 20.04.2026 Sd/- Managing Director for The Kerala Minerals and Metals Ltd

राजस्थान सरकार
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प्राविधिक शिक्षा निदेशालय, राजस्थान, जोधपुर
W-6, गौरव-पथ, जोधपुर Ph No. 0291-2432290, Fax: 0291-2632339,
Email: scheme.dot@rajasthan.gov.in
No. DTE/T-4(SCHEME)/PMPES/4324(3)/2026/60907 दिनांक: 13.04.2026

Corrigendum-IV

ई-निविदा सूचना संख्या 01/2025-26 में निम्नानुसार संशोधन किये जा रहे है:-,

S.N.	UBN No.	Corrigendum
01	UBN No. TET2526SLOB00140 TET2526SLOB00141 TET2526SLOB00142 TET2526SLOB00143 TET2526SLOB00144 TET2526SLOB00145 TET2526SLOB00146 TET2526SLOB00147	RFP में निम्नुसार आवश्यक संशोधन किये जा रहे है:- 1. Pre-Bid Conference - 24.04.2026 2. Authority response to queries latest by 28.04.2026 3. Authority's additional response, if any 06.05.2026 4. Bid due date - 27.05.2026 5. Opening of Technical Bids - 27.05.2026 6. Announcement of qualifies Bidders - 11.06.2026 7. Opening of Financial Bid - 18.06.2026 8. Letter of Award (LOA) - Within 30 days of opening of Financial Bid. 9. Validity of Bids - 120 days of Bid Due Date. 10. Signing of License Agreement- within 30 days of award of LOA

अन्य नियम एवं शर्तें पूर्ववत् रहेंगी।
DIPR/C/6983/26 निदेशक (प्रशिक्षण)

भारत सरकार
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ADVERTISEMENT NO. VSSC-339 DATED 20.04.2026
निम्नलिखित पदों के लिए ऑन-लाइन आवेदन आमंत्रित करता है
INVITES ONLINE APPLICATIONS FOR THE FOLLOWING POSITION

पद सं. Position No	पद का नाम Name of Position	अनिवार्य योग्यताएं Essential Qualifications	रिक्तियों की संख्या No. of Vacancies
01/2026	कनिष्ठ अध्येता (जेआरएफ) Junior Research Fellow (JRF)	(a) सभी सेमेस्टरों के औसत के रूप में कुल न्यूनतम 60% अंक या 10 पोइन्ट स्केल या समकक्ष पर 6.5 का सीजीपीए / सीपीआइ वर्गीकरण सहित भौतिकी / अनुप्रयुक्त भौतिकी / इंजीनियरी भौतिकी / अंतरिक्ष भौतिकी / वायुमंडलीय विज्ञान / मौसम विज्ञान ग्रहीय विज्ञान या वायुमंडलीय विज्ञान / अंतरिक्ष विज्ञान / ग्रहीय विज्ञान / अनुप्रयुक्त भौतिकी / इंजीनियरी भौतिकी में एम.एस / एम.इं / एम.टेक M.Sc. Degree in Physics / Applied Physics / Engineering Physics / Space Physics / Atmospheric Science / Meteorology / Planetary Sciences OR M.S / M.E / M.Tech in Atmospheric Science / Space Science / Planetary Science / Applied Physics / Engineering Physics with minimum 60% marks as average of all semesters in aggregate or CGPA / CPI grading of 6.5 on a 10 point scale or equivalent. (b) आवेदकों को निम्नलिखितों में से एक में भी योग्यता प्राप्त होनी चाहिए / Applicants should also have qualified one of the following: 1. नेट-लेक्चरशिप सहित सी एस आइ आर-यूजीसी राष्ट्रीय पात्रता परीक्षा / CSIR-UGC National Eligibility Test, including NET-Lectureship. 2. एमएचआरडी द्वारा आयोजित इंजीनियरी में स्नातक अभिक्षमता परीक्षा (गेट)/ Graduate Aptitude Test in Engineering (GATE) conducted by MHRD. 3. जोइन्ट एन्ट्रन्स स्क्रीनिंग टेस्ट (जेईएसटी) / Joint Entrance Screening Test (JEST)	08

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OOPS!

Rinku cashes in as Burger's butter fingers come back to haunt Royals

PTI

Nandre Burger dropped a sitter at short third to grant Rinku Singh a lifeline on eight. While that may have tilted the momentum towards KKR, the South African would've perhaps thanked the heavens for having avoided getting scratched by the 'invisible sword' of bowler Ravindra Jadeja, who sent the nastiest of glares Burger's way.

WORRISOME

In a team full of marauding batters, Royals skipper Parag yet to fire

RITU RAJ KONWAR

It must be difficult for Riyan Parag to check his batting average this season, especially when RR opening pair of Yashasvi Jaiswal and Vaibhav Suryavanshi seem like an unstoppable force. But what was 12.25 ahead of the game against KKR on Sunday slipped further to 12.20. Classic case of death by decimal and a bit of drama.

BIG BOOST

Sri Lanka fast bowler Pathirana joins Knight Riders squad

FILE PHOTO

Sri Lanka pacer Matheesha Pathirana has finally joined Kolkata Knight Riders for IPL 2026. Having recovered from a calf strain sustained in the T20 World Cup, Pathirana cleared the mandatory fitness test by Sri Lanka Cricket before receiving a no-objection certificate. He linked up with the squad on Sunday.

POSITIVE SIGNS

Dhoni just needs to get confidence in his running, says Hussey

FILE PHOTO: R. RAGU

He's (M.S. Dhoni) batting well, he even walked out of the nets early because he was very happy with where his batting is at. If he's going to bat towards the back end, he's going to have to scurry for those twos. He just needs to get confidence in his running (between the wickets) — Mike Hussey on Dhoni.

Varun, Rinku-Anukul duo fashion KKR's first win

The spinner, along with Narine and Tyagi, restricts Royals after a breezy opening stand by JaiSurya; the two left-handers add 76 off just 37 balls to lift home team from 85 for six in pursuit of 156

IPL-19

Santadeep Dey
KOLKATA

Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR), at rock bottom, finally had some light creep in through the crevice on Sunday as it bagged its first win and much-needed two points in the ongoing IPL 2026.

KKR made heavy weather of the modest target of 156 set by Rajasthan Royals (RR), but celebrated with the fervour of a title triumph at Eden Gardens.

It also snapped an eight-game winless run across two seasons for the home team.

Rinku Singh, who made the most of an early reprieve by Nandre Burger, and Anukul Roy guided KKR over the line.

The two southpaws added 76 off just 37 balls after the three-time champion had slumped to 85 for six.

Huge impact: Varun's triple strike put the brakes on RR. Rinku delivered at the crunch for KKR after Jurel's brilliance sent back the dangerous Green. RITU RAJ KONWAR

Varun's feat

Earlier, after opting to bat, RR's opening duo JaiSurya had an underwhelming outing by its high standard. While going at a run rate of over nine, Vaibhav Suryavanshi fell four short of a half-century. Varun Chakaravarthy was the one happy to oblige, the 15-year-old's being his 200th T20 wicket.

When Sunil Narine's five dot balls to Suryavanshi in the fifth over felt like a minor power outage, Ajinkya Rahane would have felt KKR had missed a trick by not opening with spin on a dry-as-bone surface.

But once Varun returned to have Dhruv Jurel stumped and Narine dismissed Yashasvi Jaiswal less than an over later, the KKR captain could finally move on from that thought.

Riyan Parag's struggles continued as Varun speared in one that cramped him for room. Narine tightened the chokehold further, inducing Donovan Ferreira to tap the final ball of his spell straight back to him.

And just when it seemed like a spinners' union meeting, Kartik Tyagi crashed the party with three wickets in the penultimate over to register his best T20 figures.

Disastrous start

In reply, KKR got off to a horrid start with Tim Seifert and Ajinkya Rahane falling for ducks.

Angkrish Raghuvanshi never got going, and Cameron Green, fresh off a 79 against Gujarat Titans, departed courtesy of some nifty glovework from Jurel. Meanwhile, Rovman Powell's stay was cut short by Ravindra Jadeja's guile.

However, a moment of luck and the brilliance of Rinku and Anukul turned it around for the Knight Riders.

SCOREBOARD

RAJASTHAN ROYALS
Yashasvi Jaiswal c Rahane b Narine 39 *(29b, 4x4, 2x6)*, Vaibhav Suryavanshi c Ramandeep b Varun 46 *(28b, 6x4, 2x6)*, Dhruv Jurel st. Seifert b Varun 5 *(7b)*, Riyan Parag b Varun 12 *(14b, 1x4)*, Shimron Hetmyer c Raghuvanshi b Tyagi 15 *(18b)*, Donovan Ferreira c & b Narine 7 *(7b, 1x6)*, Ravindra Jadeja c Green b Tyagi 9 *(7b, 1x4)*, Jofra Archer run out 8 *(5b, 1x4)*, Ravi Bishnoi c Seifert b Tyagi 0 *(2b)*, Brijesh Sharma (not out) 1 *(3b)*; Extras (b-1, lb-2, w-10): 13; Total (for nine wkts. in 20 overs): 155.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-81 (Suryavanshi, 8.4 overs), 2-97 (Jurel, 10.3), 3-99 (Jaiswal, 11.2), 4-117 (Parag, 14.4), 5-124 (Ferreira, 15.6), 6-144 (Jadeja, 18.1), 7-146 (Hetmyer, 18.3), 8-146 (Bishnoi, 18.5), 9-155 (Archer, 19.6).

KNIGHT RIDERS BOWLING
Vaibhav 4-0-37-0, Tyagi 4-0-22-3, Green 2-0-27-0, Narine 4-0-26-2, Varun 4-0-14-3, Ramandeep 2-0-26-0.

KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS
Tim Seifert b Archer 0 *(1b)*, Ajinkya Rahane c Jurel b Burger 0 *(2b)*, Angkrish Raghuvanshi **(Impact Player for Varun)** lbw b Jadeja 10 *(19b, 1x4)*, Cameron Green st. Jurel b Bishnoi 27 *(13b, 4x4, 1x6)*, Rovman Powell c Ferreira b Jadeja 23 *(20b, 2x4, 1x6)*, Rinku Singh (not out) 53 *(34b, 5x4, 2x6)*, Ramandeep Singh b Yash Raj 10 *(13b, 1x4)*, Anukul Roy (not out) 29 *(16b, 1x4, 2x6)*; Extras (lb-1, w-8): 9; Total (for six wkts. in 19.4 overs): 161.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-0 (Seifert, 0.1), 2-5 (Rahane, 1.2), 3-37 (Green, 4.3), 4-52 (Raghuvanshi, 6.6), 5-70 (Powell, 10.1), 6-85 (Ramandeep, 13.3).

ROYALS BOWLING
Archer 4-0-35-1, Burger 2-0-20-1, Bishnoi 4-0-41-1, Yash Raj **(Impact Player for Suryavanshi)** 4-0-25-1, Jadeja 3-0-8-2, Parag 1-0-10-0, Brijesh 1.4-0-21-0.

Toss: RR; **PoM:** Varun.
KKR won by four wickets with two balls to spare.

Next assignment

RR: April 22 vs. LSG Lucknow, 7.30 p.m.
KKR: April 26 vs. LSG Lucknow, 7.30 p.m.

Priyansh-Connolly assault leaves the Super Giants stunned

Dhruva Prasad
NEW CHANDIGARH

Punjab Kings remained unbeaten and consolidated its position at the top of the IPL standings with a commanding 54-run win over Lucknow Super Giants at the Maharaja Yadavindra Singh Stadium on Sunday.

The PBKS bowlers rose in unison after Priyansh Arya and Cooper Connolly put on a blistering 182-run second-wicket partnership off just 80 balls to power the host to 254 for seven, the highest score of the season. In reply LSG was standing at 61, with Ayush Badoni's promotion as opener working to an extent, before V. Vyshak dismissed him off the last ball of the PowerPlay.

Rishabh Pant's consecutive sixes off Marco Jansen in the following over, including a trademark one-handed swing that cleared long-on, kept Super Giants' hopes alive. However, with Pant and Nicholas Pooran falling in quick succession, and 113 runs to get from the last five overs, Super Giants were fighting a battle which was nearly impossible to win.

Earlier, batting first for the first time in this IPL, Kings rode on magnificent knocks from Priyansh and Connolly. The left-handed duo's assault on a hapless LSG attack was of such magnitude that the final five overs, which yielded 61 runs, seemed sedate in comparison.

Left is right: Priyansh and Connolly sent the Lucknow bowlers on a leather hunt. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

PBKS was roaring at 179 for one after 13 overs, following a 32-run over bowled by Aiden Markram, which contained five sixes.

Prince Yadav, the only Super Giants bowler who escaped the host's wrath, put the skids on the scoring rate by dismissing Connolly with a short ball, before M. Siddharth prised out Priyansh.

After LSG elected to bowl, Mohammed Shami sent back the in-form Prabhsimran Singh for a golden duck with an outswinger in the first over, while Prince kept Connolly quiet. Once the field opened up, Connolly, who was lucky not to have a leg-before appeal reviewed when he was on four, made Pant & Co. pay and raised a 35-ball fifty.

Priyansh, operating on a wholly different wavelength, brought up his half-century off just 19 balls to set the perfect launchpad for Punjab's fifth win.

SCOREBOARD

PUNJAB KINGS
Priyansh Arya c Marsh b Siddharth 93 *(37b, 4x4, 9x6)*, Prabhsimran Singh c Marsh b Shami 0 *(1b)*, Cooper Connolly c Siddharth b Prince 87 *(46b, 8x4, 7x6)*, Shreyas Iyer c Shami b Mohsin 5 *(6b)*, Marcus Stoinis run out 29 *(16b, 2x4, 2x6)*, Nehal Wadhera c Pooran b Siddharth 13 *(7b, 1x4, 1x6)*, Shashank Singh c Markram b Prince 17 *(6b, 1x4, 2x6)*, Marco Jansen (not out) 1 *(1b)*; Extras (lb-3, w-6): 9; Total (for seven wkts. in 20 overs): 254.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-3 (Prabhsimran, 0.3 overs), 2-185 (Connolly, 13.5), 3-187 (Priyansh, 14.2), 4-193 (Shreyas, 15.2), 5-208 (Wadhera, 16.5), 6-252 (Shashank, 19.4), 7-254 (Stoinis, 19.6).

SUPER GIANTS BOWLING
Shami 4-0-56-1, Mohsin 4-0-43-1, Prince 4-0-25-2, Badoni 1-0-14-0, Avesh 3-0-46-0, Siddharth 3-0-35-2, Markram 1-0-32-0.

LUCKNOW SUPER GIANTS
Mitchell Marsh c Bartlett b Chahal 40 *(28b, 3x4, 2x6)*, Ayush Badoni c Bartlett b Vyshak 35 *(21b, 5x4, 1x6)*, Rishabh Pant c Prabhsimran b Arshdeep 43 *(23b, 1x4, 4x6)*, Nicholas Pooran c Shreyas b Jansen 9 *(9b, 1x4)*, Aiden Markram c Stoinis b Jansen 42 *(22b, 3x4, 3x6)*, Mukul Choudhary (not out) 21 *(17b, 1x4, 1x6)*, Himmat Singh **(Impact Player for Mohsin)** 1 *(1b)*; Extras (lb-2, nb-1, w-6): 9; Total (for five wkts. in 20 overs): 200.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-61 (Badoni, 5.6), 2-109 (Marsh, 11.1), 3-128 (Pant, 12.4), 4-139 (Pooran, 14.2), 5-199 (Markram, 19.5).

KINGS BOWLING
Arshdeep 4-0-41-1, Bartlett 4-0-54-0, Jansen 4-0-37-2, Vyshak **(Impact Player for Wadhera)** 4-0-30-1, Chahal 4-0-36-1.

Toss: LSG; **PoM:** Priyansh.
PBKS won by 54 runs.

Next assignment

LSG: April 22 vs. RR Lucknow, 7.30 p.m.
PBKS: April 25 vs. DC Delhi, 3.30 p.m.

Points table

	M	W	L	NR	PTS	NRR
Punjab Kings	6	5	0	1	11	1.420
Royal Challengers	6	4	2	0	8	1.171
Rajasthan Royals	6	4	2	0	8	0.599
Sunrisers Hyderabad	6	3	3	0	6	0.566
Delhi Capitals	5	3	2	0	6	0.310
Gujarat Titans	5	3	2	0	6	0.018
Chennai Super Kings	6	2	4	0	4	-0.780
Lucknow Super Giants	6	2	4	0	4	-1.173
Kolkata Knight Riders	7	1	5	1	3	-0.879
Mumbai Indians	5	1	4	0	2	-1.076

Klaasen. NAGARA GOPAL

I need to get the job done, says Klaasen

Anirudh Velamuri
HYDERABAD

While runs continue to flow from Heinrich Klaasen's bat, his strike-rate has come under scrutiny.

This season, he has scored at 144.39 – significantly lower than his previous highs of over 170.

After SRH's 10-run win against CSK, Klaasen emphasised that his priority was navigating the team through difficult situations. "I've been coming in at situations where we've lost four wickets in one or two overs. I cannot go right from the start, I need to get the job done. I don't care about strike-rates. I know a lot has been said about it, but I've been putting the team in good positions".

Desperate MI hopes to return to winning ways against GT

The five-time champion has just a solitary victory in five games while the home team is on a three-match winning run; the visiting side to take a call on Rohit only on match day; Santner regains fitness; Gill, Buttler hold the key for the host

IPL-19

Shayan Acharya
AHMEDABAD

In a huge relief to Mumbai Indians, Rohit Sharma had a long batting session in the nets at the Narendra Modi Stadium, with bowling coach Paras Mhambrey declaring that he is 'fit'.

However, a call on his availability for Monday's crucial IPL 2026 fixture against Gujarat Titans will be taken only on the match day.

It has been a forgettable campaign for the five-time champion so far, with just a solitary win in five games, and as the team takes on a high-flying Titans outfit on a black-soil surface, the focus will firmly be on getting its campaign back on track.

"It's important to acknowledge the fact that we are in this situation. And we need to work as a unit to come out of this," Mhambrey said. "I can assure you that we are working on it. There is no panic in the team. It's a tough format. If you don't turn up and play your best cricket, you are not going to win."

Suspense continues: It remains to be seen whether Rohit will be back for the vital clash. VIJAY SONEJI

While Quinton de Kock stepped in for Rohit and scored a ton, Suryakumar Yadav and Tilak Varma have been inconsistent so far. In a must-win situation, the team management, as suggested by captain Hardik Pandya, may need tough calls. Mhambrey, however, did not elaborate on the possible changes.

Bowling remains a concern, with none of the star recruits making a telling impact so far. Mitchell Santner is fit and expected to return against the Titans. "Santner is fit. Unlucky we missed him last game. He picked up a bug," Mhambrey said.

With five wins from eight games, Titans hold the edge over Mumbai.

Shubman Gill has led from the front with consistent runs, while Jos Buttler has chipped in with vital knocks.

Rashid Khan and Prasidh Krishna have been impressive in the middle overs and will look to exploit MI's struggles.

GT coach Nehra with captain Gill. VIJAY SONEJI

The week ahead

April 20	GT vs. MI	Ahmedabad	7.30 p.m.
April 21	SRH vs. DC	Hyderabad	7.30 p.m.
April 22	LSG vs. RR	Lucknow	7.30 p.m.
April 23	MI vs. CSK	Mumbai	7.30 p.m.
April 24	RCB vs. GT	Bengaluru	7.30 p.m.
April 25	DC vs. PBKS	Delhi	3.30 p.m.
April 25	RR vs. SRH	Jaipur	7.30 p.m.
April 26	CSK vs. GT	Chennai	3.30 p.m.
April 26	LSG vs. KKR	Lucknow	7.30 p.m.

Today's match

GUJARAT TITANS vs MUMBAI INDIANS

Ahmedabad, 7.30 p.m.

HEAD-TO-HEAD

Played: 8

GT 5 | MI 3

PREVIOUS MEETING

MI won by 20 runs, 2025

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1 & JIOHOTSTAR

Dream moment to play in World championship: Vaishali

CHESS

S. Prasanna Venkatesan
CHENNAI

Grandmaster R. Vaishali, who returned to Chennai on Sunday after clinching the Candidates title, expressed joy, calling it a "dream moment" to be playing in a World championship as she prepares for her maiden appearance.

"First of all, I'm very happy that I've won the Candidates. It's a dream moment for me to be playing in a World Championship because, as a kid, I followed many World Championship matches, and now I'll be playing one. I'm very excited and looking forward to it," she said on her arrival at the Chennai airport from Cyprus.

Reflecting on the tournament's closing stages, Vaishali described the event as intensely competitive. "It was a very close event and an unpredictable one. It could have gone either way. I'm very happy I won the last game, which was very crucial in a very tense situation."

She secured the title in the final round by defeating Kateryna Lagno of Russia, finishing with 8.5 points from 14 rounds, half a point ahead of Bibisara Assaubayeva of Kazakhstan.

On how the victory has shaped her outlook as a player, Vaishali kept her response simple but telling. "I mean, it's a very strong tournament. I'm very happy that I've won," she said, underlining both the significance and the difficulty of the achievement.

Grand welcome: Vaishali on arrival at the Chennai airport on Sunday. M. SRINATH

On the role of her sparring partner and second, M. Pranesh, during the closing rounds, Vaishali said, "It was very crucial. He made sure that I was not getting tense, and his presence was very valuable."

Endurance test

The tournament, she admitted, tested her endurance and mental strength. "It's a long tournament and quite a gruelling one. I think you have to be focused until the end, and handling the pressure was a learning for me," she said.

On her previous win over reigning World Champion Ju Wenjun of China at the Norway Chess last year and having to face her again at the World Championship, the 24-year-old said, "It was an Armageddon game, and I think we have played very few classical games. I'm excited for the match."

The possibility of the World Championship being hosted in India – and potentially in Chennai – adds another layer of excitement. While she did not dwell on the venue, the prospect of a home advantage has generated significant interest.

For now, however, Vaishali plans to step back briefly. "The last few months have been quite hectic. I think I'll spend some time with my family," she said.

'Bumrah is fighting his way through'

Shayan Acharya
AHMEDABAD

It has been quite a dismal IPL 2026 for Jasprit Bumrah so far.

The Mumbai Indians pace spearhead has not only gone wicketless in all five games (conceding 164 runs), but he also leaked runs at 10.25 per over in the previous outing against Punjab Kings.

This is an unusual stretch for a bowler of his calibre. The last time he endured a similar phase was back in 2014, when he went four matches without a breakthrough.

However, MI bowling coach Paras Mhambrey backed the under-fire fast bowler, calling him a "fighter".

"I don't think it's a challenging situation. Booms is a fighter. He is fighting his way through. Everything can't be related to just wickets," Mhambrey said.

"He bowls at different stages of the game. Many times, he comes in at different roles for us, in terms of finishing the PowerPlay. For me, the most important bit is how he turns up for practice every session," he added.

> I don't think it's a challenging situation. Everything can't be related to just wickets
>
> **MHAMBREY**
> MI bowling coach

"At the nets yesterday [Saturday], he came in with the same intensity, did the stuff that is expected out of him. I have no doubt about him. I'm sure others in the team as well – the captain, the coach and all the management – have no doubt in terms of his performance.... All that effort will translate into wickets in future games," the bowling coach said.

Meanwhile, Will Jacks is yet to join the team.

CSK skipper Ruturaj has to get his act together quickly

S. Shrivathsan

When it rains, it pours. In the 19th iteration of India's summer cricket carnival, Chennai Super Kings captain Ruturaj Gaikwad has had a woeful batting run. CSK's poor start to the IPL 2026 season (two wins in six matches) has piled on the misery.

Ruturaj, in the company of the new Super King Sanju Samson, was expected to carry the batting unit. But, with returns of 82 runs in six innings at a strike-rate of 112.33 and an average of 13.67, the 29-year-old has failed to lead from the front.

Having decided to return to the top of the order – he had preferred to walk out at No. 3 in the previous season – Ruturaj has often had starting trouble.

He has been dismissed for single digits thrice and scored more than 20 just once.

He has survived the PowerPlay only twice and even in one of those knocks, he was back in the dugout two deliveries after the field restrictions were eased.

The opener has fallen prey to different types of bowlers – thrice to pacers, twice to left-arm spinners and once to a leggie – and the dismissals suggest he has to work on his technical shortcomings.

In Super Kings' 180-plus run chases, Ruturaj's returns of 174 in 13 innings at 126.08 have not been good enough in an era where elite batters and teams are mastering the art of hunting down huge targets.

The CSK skipper needs to shed his conservative approach and return to his combative self which has elevated him to where he is today.

Double whammy: Ruturaj's waning returns have compounded CSK's troubles. NAGARA GOPAL

Assist provider: Vaishali benefitted from Pranesh's presence.

I helped Vaishali with openings, provided her motivation: Pranesh

C. Shyam Sundar
CHENNAI

Chess is said to take a toll on the players mentally. It is here the role of a second or sparring partner becomes crucial, and M. Pranesh performed it rather well for World championship challenger R. Vaishali.

The 19-year-old Grandmaster from Karaikudi was brought on board to not only help Vaishali gamewise but also keep things light during the FIDE Candidates in Cyprus.

"It was very crucial. Pranesh made sure that I was not getting tense, and his presence was valuable," Vaishali, who won the tournament to fight with China's Ju Wenjun for the world title, said on her arrival.

On his role during the Candidates event, Pranesh told *The Hindu*, "I was helping her with openings and providing motivation. Vaishali *akka* tends to get upset after losses and the onus was on me to keep things light and keep her motivated."

He recalled that Vaishali, who had a poor run in 2025, including in the Chennai Grand Masters where he won the Challengers section, had to be spoken to during the bid to rediscover her mojo.

The Candidates is a high-pressure tournament and there is a need to keep players relaxed. Which is why coach R.B. Ramesh felt a player was needed to bring calmness.

"I helped calm *akka* (Vaishali) down and unwind during the rest days. At the same time, we used to play some games and also had time to prepare," Pranesh said. "She would become serious, especially after a defeat...but after coming out and seeing me, she would become normal."

The young GM is coy about the hand he had in Vaishali's epochal triumph, saying she raised her level of play when it mattered most. Pranesh ensured the tension didn't get to Vaishali, made her feel at home and return as the Candidates champion.

AICF will bid to host World C'ship: Verma

S. Prasanna Venkatesan
CHENNAI

The All India Chess Federation (AICF) will bid to host the upcoming World Championship matches in India, said Head of Operations A.K. Verma on Sunday, expressing confidence now that two Indians are set to contest – reigning champion D. Gukesh in the open section and challenger R. Vaishali in the women's section.

Proud occasion

"Of course, we will try to bring it to India. We will be doing the bidding. We are very happy and proud that two Indians, in both categories, are going to fight for the World Championships. Chess is booming in India, and we are lucky that both Gukesh and Vaishali will be playing. It really is amazing and gives immense pleasure to all chess players, chess lovers, and all Indians," he said before receiving Vaishali at the Chennai airport.

Recalling the previous bid in 2024, Verma said FIDE had initially been open to awarding the event to Tamil Nadu.

"Initially, they (FIDE) were ready, frankly speaking. We (AICF) were ready, too. Whatever amount FIDE said, we were ready to pay, and the Tamil Nadu government was also ready to match that.

"But they got better sponsorship from Singapore, and we did not like it when it was taken there. Had it been here, it would have got huge mileage. I was present in Singapore and did not see much publicity," he said.

Kadur surges to victory despite turbo failure

MOTORSPORTS

Sports Bureau
CHENNAI

Karna Kadur (along with co-driver Kumar Ramaswamy) of Arka Motorsports survived a turbo failure and surged to victory in the 49th South India Rally, organised by the Madras Motor Sports Club, at the Madras International Circuit, here on Sunday. Kadur's arch-rival, Gaurav Gill, retired with a mechanical problem.

Finishing in second spot in the APRC was Jeet Jhabkah and co-driver Musa Sherif, while the Spanish husband-wife team of Edgar Vigo Lopez and Fatima Ameneiro Teijeiro completed the podium.

MMSC honoured Sherif with a memento in recognition of his achieving a landmark figure of competing in his 350th career rally, both nationally and internationally.

On top: Kadur, left, and co-driver Kumar celebrate their victory.

In the INRC Overall segment, the top three finishers, besides Kadur, were Ritesh Guttedar and M. Suraj (AART Motorsports) who finished second ahead of Arvind Dheerendra and Shahid Salman (Duran Racing). Ritesh topped the INRC 2 class.

The only hiccup for Kadur in an otherwise perfect run was the sudden loss of turbo power in Sunday's second Special Stage that cost him over a minute when leading Gill by about 30 seconds.

However, three-time APRC champion Gill himself stopped with a mechanical problem on the same stage. It turned the tide irrevocably in Kadur's favour, whose service crew did a superb job in resolving the turbo issue during the 30-minute service break.

Provisional classification:
Asia-Pacific Rally Championship: 1. Karna Kadur & Kumar Ramaswamy (Arka Motorsports) (01hr, 59mins, 55.5secs); 2. Jeet Jabhakh & Musa Sherif (02:04:58.0); 3. Edgar Vigo Lopez & Fatima Ameneiro Teijeiro (Spain) (02:05:47.8).

Indian National Rally Championship: INRC Overall: 1. Kadur & Kumar (Arka Motorsports) (01:59:55.5); 2. Ritesh Guttedar & M. Suraj (AART Motorsports) (02:04:27.4); 3. Arvind Dheerendra & Shahid Salman (Duran Racing) (02:04:29.2).

INRC 2: 1. Guttedar & Suraj (02:04:27.4); 2. Jabhakh & Sherif (02:04:58.0); 3. Arjun Y. Mavaji & J. Jeevarathinam (Chettinad Sporting) (02:07:49.8).

INRC 3: 1. Arvind & Shahid (02:04:29.2); 2. Chandan Manchegowda & Suraj Keshav Prasad (Arka Motorsports) (02:06:02.4); 3. Tarushi Vikram & Athreya Kousgi (Chettinad Sporting) (02:06:46.1).

INRC 3T: 1. Vishakh Balachandran & Chiranth Jain (Duran Racing) (02:05:43.6); 2. Anushriya Gulati & Karan Aukta (Arka Motorsports) (02:06:38.8); 3. K.C. Adith & C.A Avinash (Arka Motorsports) (02:11:01.9).

Ladies: 1. Tarushi & Athreya (02:06:46.1); 2. Athira Murali & Arun Chakkalakkal (Duran Racing) (02:15:30.0); 3. Sonakshi Paranthaman & Dheeraj Salimath (Chettinad Sporting) (02:20:56.8).

Junior INRC: 1. Tarushi & Athreya (02:06:46.1); 2. Sonakshi & Dheeraj (02:20:56.8); 3. Hoshmand Elavia & Venu Ramesh Kumar (02:50:41.3).

Masters Cup: 1. Pradeep Ravi & Thimmu Uddapanda (Arka Motorsports) (02:07:15.1); 2. Balakrishna Jayasimha & Arjun Dheerendra (Pvt.) (02:18:13.6).

Classic Cup: 1. M.P. Sreejesh & K.M. Naushad (Pvt.) (02:38:28.7).

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M BG-BGE

INBRIEF

Selection committee chief Agarkar's contract renewed

Ajit Agarkar will continue as chairman of the senior selection committee after the BCCI decided to renew his contract for one more year, keeping an eye on the 2027 ODI World Cup. Under Agarkar's chairmanship, the Indian teams reached four ICC tournament finals between October 2023 and March 2026. "Agarkar didn't seek extension. A selector can continue up to four years in either junior or senior panel and five years cumulatively across both committees. Hence his contract is being renewed and not extended," said a senior BCCI source.

Productive weeks for Balaji and Anirudh

Sriram Balaji and Anirudh Chandrasekar, with their respective partners, had productive weeks as they clinched their 18th and 10th ATP Challenger doubles titles respectively. At the Oeiras Open 3 ATP 125 in Portugal on Saturday, Balaji and Neil Oberleitner of Austria defeated Nicolas Barrientos of Colombia and Ariel Behar of Uruguay 6-7(7), 6-4, [11-9]. It was 36-year-old Balaji's fourth trophy in 2026 and is likely to push him up to 67 in the rankings, seven shy of his career-best number. At the Busan Open ATP 125 in South Korea on Sunday, Anirudh and Japan's Takeru Yuzuki overcame Dutchman Jean-Julien Rojer and United States' Theodore Winegar 4-6, 6-3, [10-7]. It was 27-year-old Anirudh's first title of the season and is set to help him re-enter the top-100.

LIVE TELECAST

Bangladesh vs New Zealand: 2nd ODI, FanCode, 10.30 a.m.
IPL: Star Sports 1 & JioHotstar, 7.30 p.m.
ISL: Sony Sports Ten 2 & FanCode, 7.30 p.m.
Serie A: DAZN, 12.15 a.m. (Tuesday)

A record-extending 35th Bundesliga title for Bayern

Manchester City posts a vital win over Arsenal in the Premier League race; United and Liverpool firm up their bids for European places; Tottenham remains mired in the relegation zone

EURO LEAGUES

Agence France-Presse
MUNICH

Unstoppable: Bayern Munich players celebrate after wrapping up yet another top flight title with four games to spare. REUTERS

Harry Kane scored his 32nd goal of the campaign as Bayern Munich came from behind to beat Stuttgart 4-2 and claim a record-extending 35th Bundesliga title.

Raphael Guerreiro, Nicolas Jackson and Alphonso Davies joined Kane on the scoresheet, while Chris Fuehrich and Chema Andres scored for the visitor as Bayern won the title with four matches to spare.

Manchester City is breathing down Arsenal's necks after Erling Haaland's strike beat the Gunners 2-1 on Sunday to land a potentially decisive blow in the Premier League title race.

Pep Guardiola's men close to within three points of the leader and have a game in hand with momentum firmly in their favour as Arsenal's quest for a first league title in 22 years unravels.

Victory over relegation-bound Burnley on Wednesday will take City top for the first time this year.

After finishing second for the past three seasons, Arsenal is at risk of seeing another huge chance to end its long wait to be champion of England slip away.

After Rayan Cherki's stunning solo effort opened the scoring, City gifted the visitors a route back into the game when Kai Havertz charged down Gianluigi Donnarumma's attempted clearance to equalise.

Haaland pounced to sweep in his 34th goal of the season 25 minutes from time before Havertz headed over a glorious chance deep into stoppage time.

Matheus Cunha fired Manchester United towards the Champions League with a 1-0 win at Chelsea on Saturday, while Tottenham remains in the relegation zone after twice blowing the lead to draw with Brighton.

Virgil van Dijk scored a last-gasp winner against Everton on Sunday as Liverpool strengthened its push for a Champions League spot next season.

On a pivotal day in the English top division, fourth-placed Aston Villa squandered a two-goal lead against Sunderland but scored in stoppage time to win 4-3.

At the other end of the table, Morgan Gibbs-White netted a hat-trick as struggling Nottingham Forest came from behind against Burnley to win 4-1 and heap the pressure on troubled Tottenham.

Napoli could concede the Serie A title to Inter Milan as soon as next week after falling to a 2-0 home defeat at the hands of Lazio on Saturday.

The results: Premier League: Everton 1 (Beto 54) lost to Liverpool 2 (Salah 29, van Dijk 90+10); Nottingham Forest 4 (Gibbs-White 62, 69, 77, Jesus 90+8) bt Burnley 1 (Flemming 45+2); Aston Villa 4 (Watkins 2, 36, Rogers 46, Abraham 90+3) bt Sunderland 3 (Rigg 9, Hume 86, Isidor 87); Manchester City 2 (Cherki 16, Haaland 65) bt Arsenal 1 (Havertz 18).

Serie A: Verona 0 lost to AC Milan 1 (Rabiot 41).

Bundesliga: Bayern Munich 4 (Guerreiro 31, Jackson 33, Davies 37, Kane 52) bt Stuttgart 2 (Fuehrich 21, Andres 88).

On Saturday: Premier League: Tottenham 2 (Porro 39, Simons 77) drew with Brighton 2 (Mitoma 45+3, Rutter 90+5); Chelsea 0 lost to Manchester United 1 (Cunha 43). **Serie A:** Napoli 0 lost to Lazio 2 (Cancellieri 6, Basic 57); Roma 1 (Hermoso 45) drew with Atalanta 1 (Krstovic 12); Udinese 0 lost to Parma 1 (Elphege 51).

Bundesliga: Eintracht Frankfurt 1 (Larsson 34) lost to RB Leipzig 3 (Diomande 27, Nusa 70, Harder 81).

Aggressive: Shafali gave India a solid start in her 100th T20I but it was not enough. BCCI.TV

SA consigns India to a second straight defeat

INDIA IN SA

Press Trust of India
DURBAN

Laura Wolvaardt made a free-flowing 54 and Sune Luus complemented her skipper with a well-composed 57 as South Africa crushed India by eight wickets in the second women's T20I on Sunday.

Earlier, India was bundled for a below-par 147 before Wolvaardt and Luus added 106 for the opening stand in just 12 overs during the chase. South Africa now leads the five-match series 2-0.

Wolvaardt reached her fifty, 15th in a stellar T20I career so far, off just 30 balls. At the other end, Luus was more patient, working spinners around for singles and twos with occasional boundaries.

Shreyanka, however, got rid of both of them, but it came too late to alter the course of the match.

Earlier, opener Shafali Verma struck a typically aggressive 57 in her 100th T20I but the rest struggled against a largely accurate South Africa attack. Shafali was involved in a fine stand of 53 with debutant Anushka Sharma (28) but it was not a smooth stay by any stretch of imagination.

After losing Smriti Mandhana and Jemimah Rodrigues in successive overs of left-arm spinner Chloe Tryon, India mounted a comeback through Shafali and Anushka.

But taking a cue from their spinners, pacers Ayabonga Khaka, Tumi Sekhukhune and Nadine de Klerk mixed cutters and slow balls to keep the Indian batters guessing.

Shafali fell skying Noku Mlaba to De Klerk in the deep. A little bit earlier, Tryon ousted Anushka as India slipped to 109 for four. Skipper Harmanpreet Kaur, Richa Ghosh and Deepti Sharma all fell trying to accelerate. In fact, India lost eight wickets for a mere 48 runs in that period of disarray.

The scores:
India 147 in 20 overs (Shafali Verma 57, Anushka Sharma 28, Tumi Sekhukhune 3/31, Chloe Tryon 3/22) lost to South Africa 148/2 in 17.1 overs (Laura Wolvaardt 54, Sune Luus 57, Shreyanka Patil 2/35).
Toss: South Africa; **PoM:** Tryon.
South Africa won by eight wickets and leads the five-match series 2-0.

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